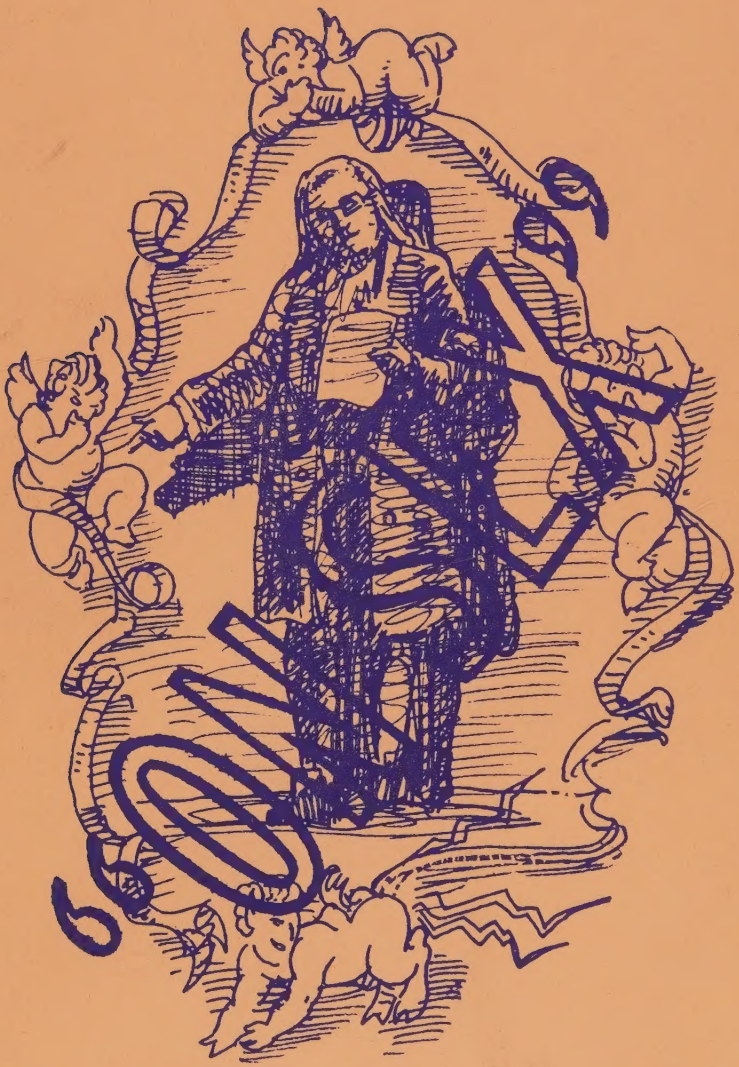

FACETIÆ FRANKLIANA

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

ON

MARRIAGE

Privately Printed

for

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1929

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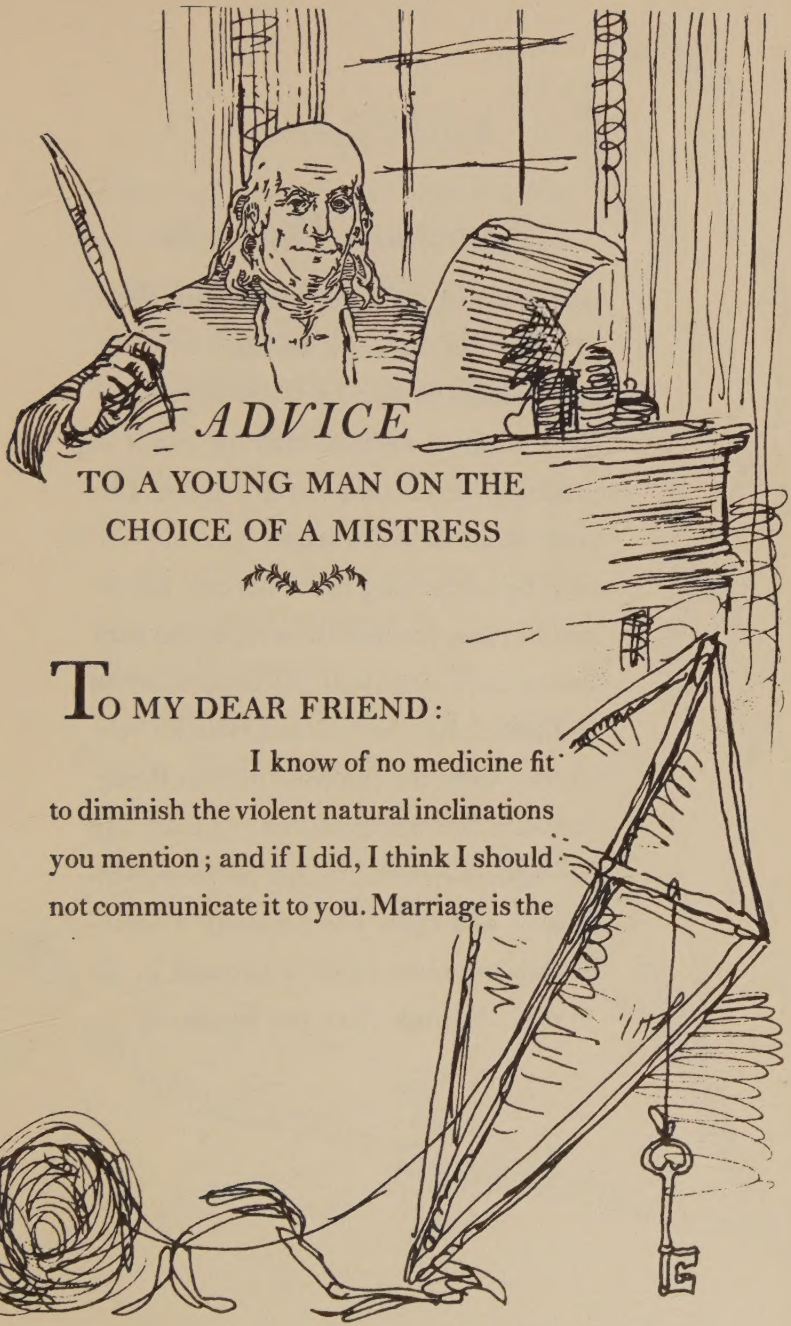


ADVICE

TO A YOUNG MAN ON THE CHOICE OF A MISTRESS

TO MY DEAR FRIEND:

I know of no medicine fit to diminish the violent natural inclinations you mention; and if I did, I think I should not communicate it to you. Marriage is the

proper remedy. It is the most natural State of Man, and therefore the State in which you are most likely to find solid Happiness. Your Reasons against entering into it at present appear to me not well founded. The circumstantial Advantages you have in view by postponing it, are not only uncertain, but they are small in comparison with that of the Thing itself, the being married and settled. It is the Man and Woman united that make the compleat human Being. Separate, She wants his Force of Body and Strength of Reason; he, her Softness, Sensibility, and acute Discernment. Together they are more likely to succeed in the World. A single Man has not nearly the

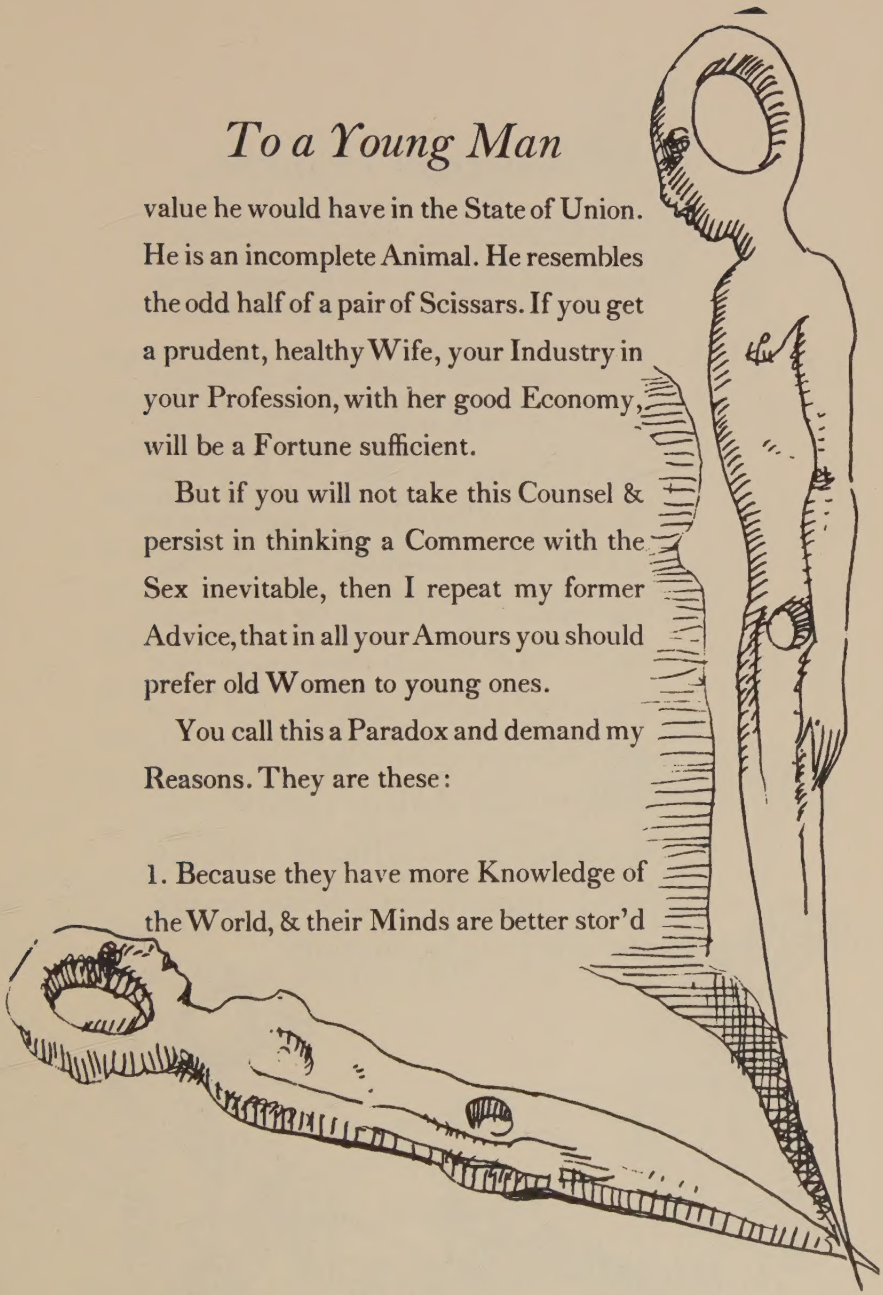
To a Young Man

value he would have in the State of Union. He is an incomplete Animal. He resembles the odd half of a pair of Scissars. If you get a prudent, healthy Wife, your Industry in your Profession, with her good Economy, will be a Fortune sufficient.

But if you will not take this Counsel & persist in thinking a Commerce with the Sex inevitable, then I repeat my former Advice, that in all your Amours you should prefer old Women to young ones.

You call this a Paradox and demand my Reasons. They are these:

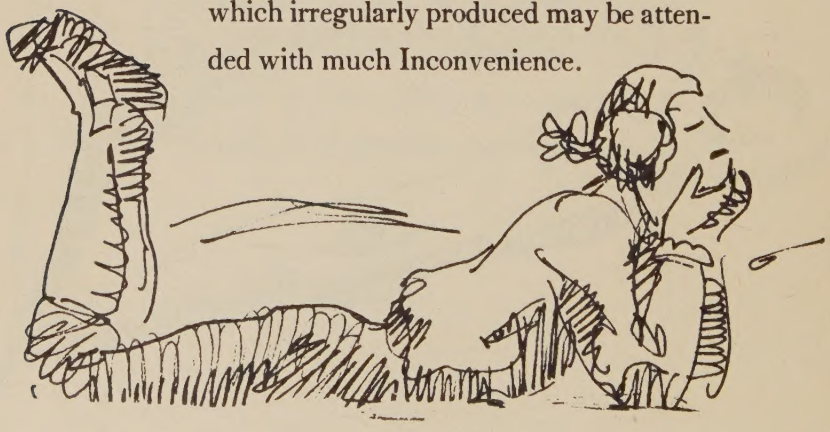
1. Because they have more Knowledge of the World, & their Minds are better stor'd



with Observations, their Conversation is more improving, & more lastingly agreeable.

2. Because when Women cease to be handsome they study to be good. To maintain their Influence over men, they supply the Diminution of Beauty by an Augmentation of Utility. They learn to do a thousand Services small & great, & are the most tender and useful of Friends when you are sick. Thus they continue amiable. And hence there is hardly such a thing to be found as an old Woman who is not a good Woman.

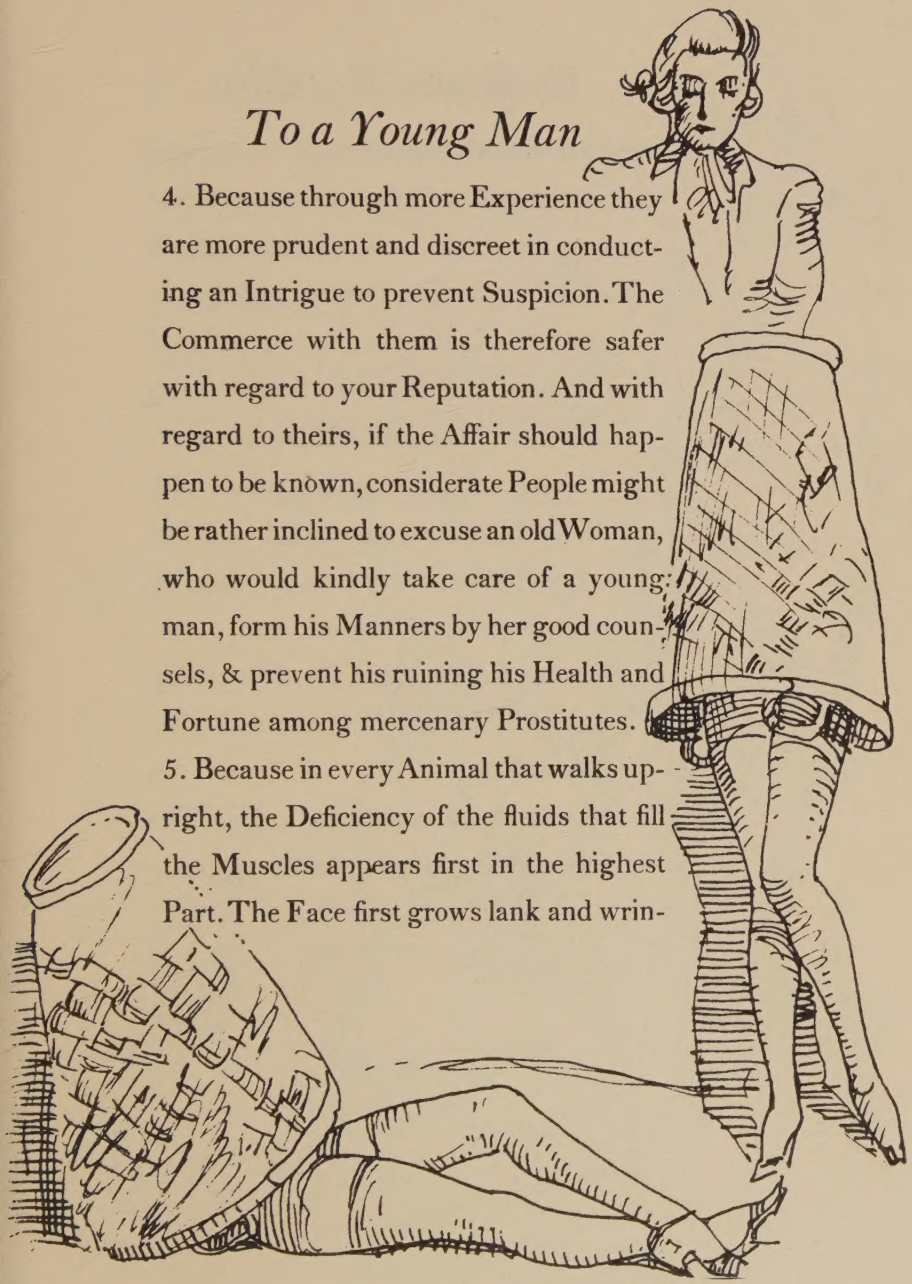
3. Because there is no Hazard of Children, which irregularly produced may be attended with much Inconvenience.



To a Young Man

4. Because through more Experience they are more prudent and discreet in conducting an Intrigue to prevent Suspicion. The Commerce with them is therefore safer with regard to your Reputation. And with regard to theirs, if the Affair should happen to be known, considerate People might be rather inclined to excuse an old Woman, who would kindly take care of a young man, form his Manners by her good counsels, & prevent his ruining his Health and Fortune among mercenary Prostitutes.

5. Because in every Animal that walks upright, the Deficiency of the fluids that fill the Muscles appears first in the highest Part. The Face first grows lank and wrin-



kled; then the Neck; then the Breast and Arms; the lower Parts continuing to the last as plump as ever: so that covering all above with a Basket, and regarding only what is below the Girdle, it is impossible of two Women to tell an old one from a young one. And as in the dark all Cats are grey, the Pleasure of Corporal Enjoyment with an old Woman is at least equal, and frequently superior; every Knack being, by Practice, capable of Improvement.

6. Because the Sin is less. The debauching a Virgin may be her Ruin, and make her for Life unhappy.

7. Because the Compunction is less. The having made a young Girl miserable may

To a Young Man

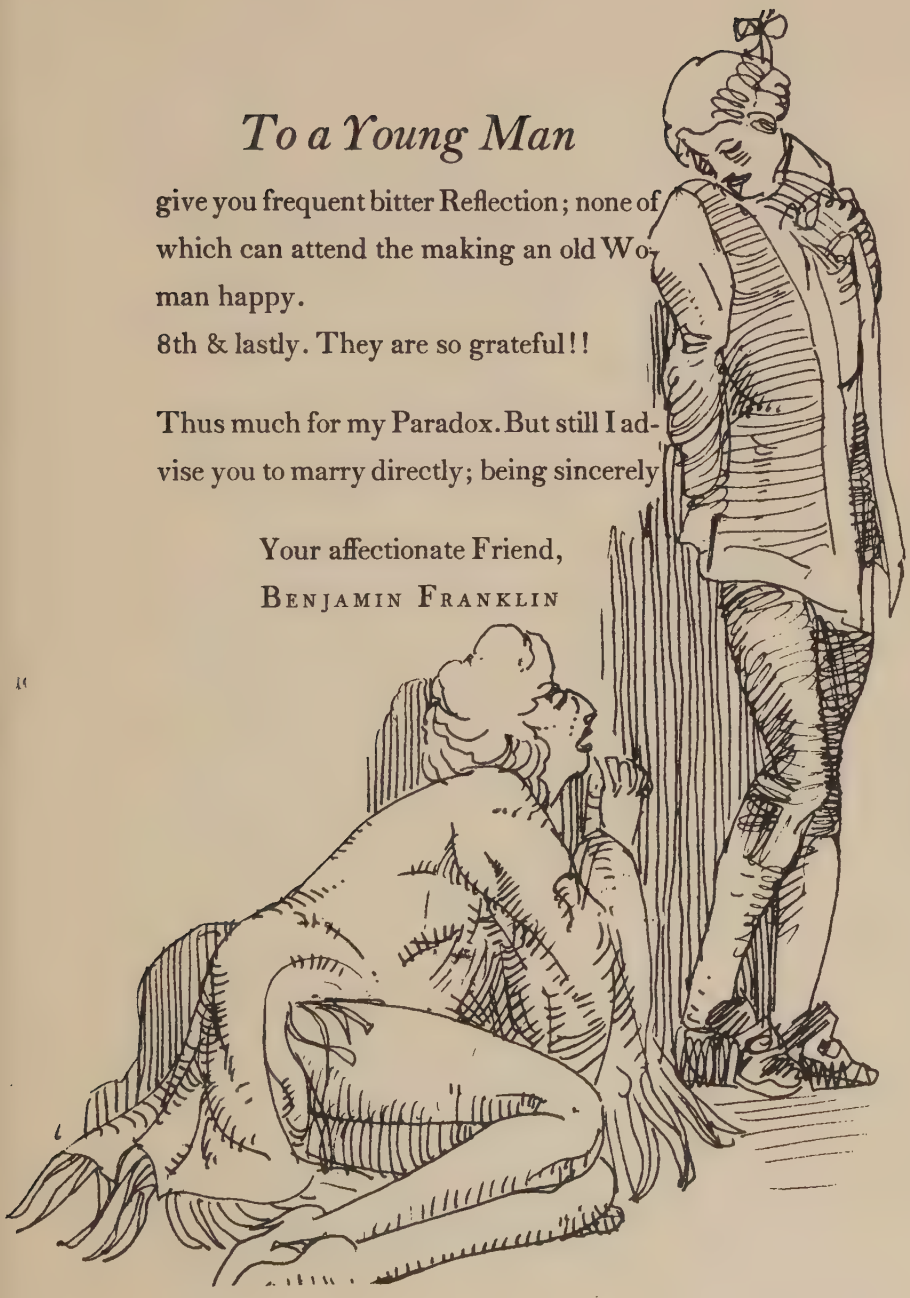
give you frequent bitter Reflection; none of which can attend the making an old Woman happy.

8th & lastly. They are so grateful!!

Thus much for my Paradox. But still I advise you to marry directly; being sincerely

Your affectionate Friend,

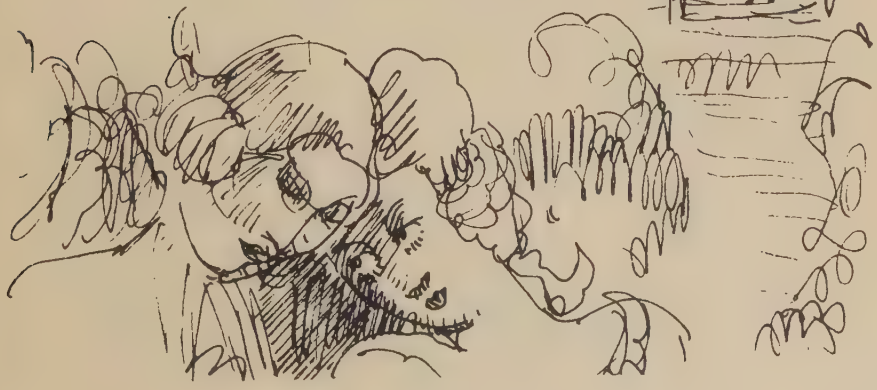
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

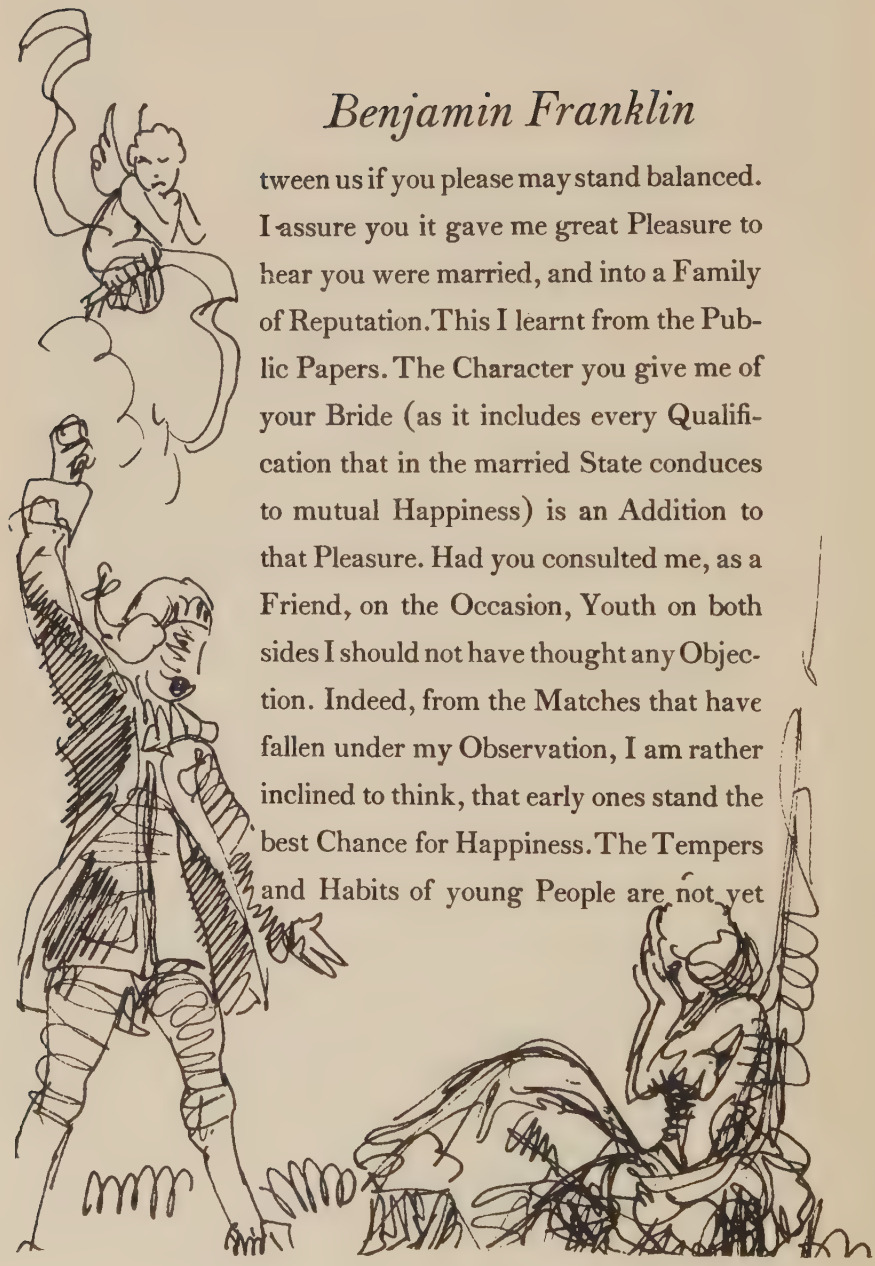


ON EARLY MARRIAGE

DEAR SIR

You made an Apology to me for not acquaintg me sooner with your Marriage. I ought now to make an Apology to you for delaying so long the Answer to your Letter. It was mislaid or hid among my Papers and much Business put it out of my Mind, or prevented my looking for it and writing when I thought of it. So this Account be-

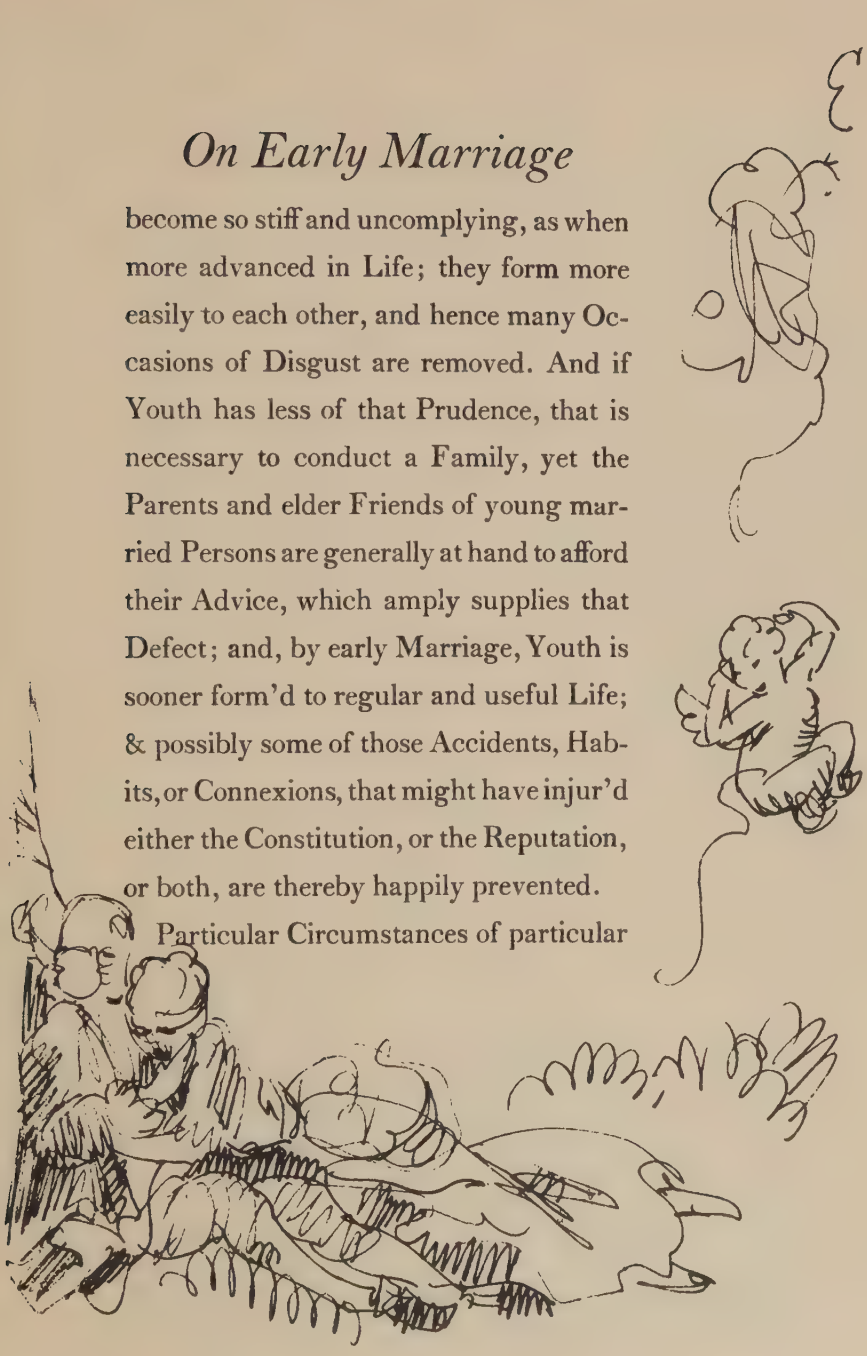




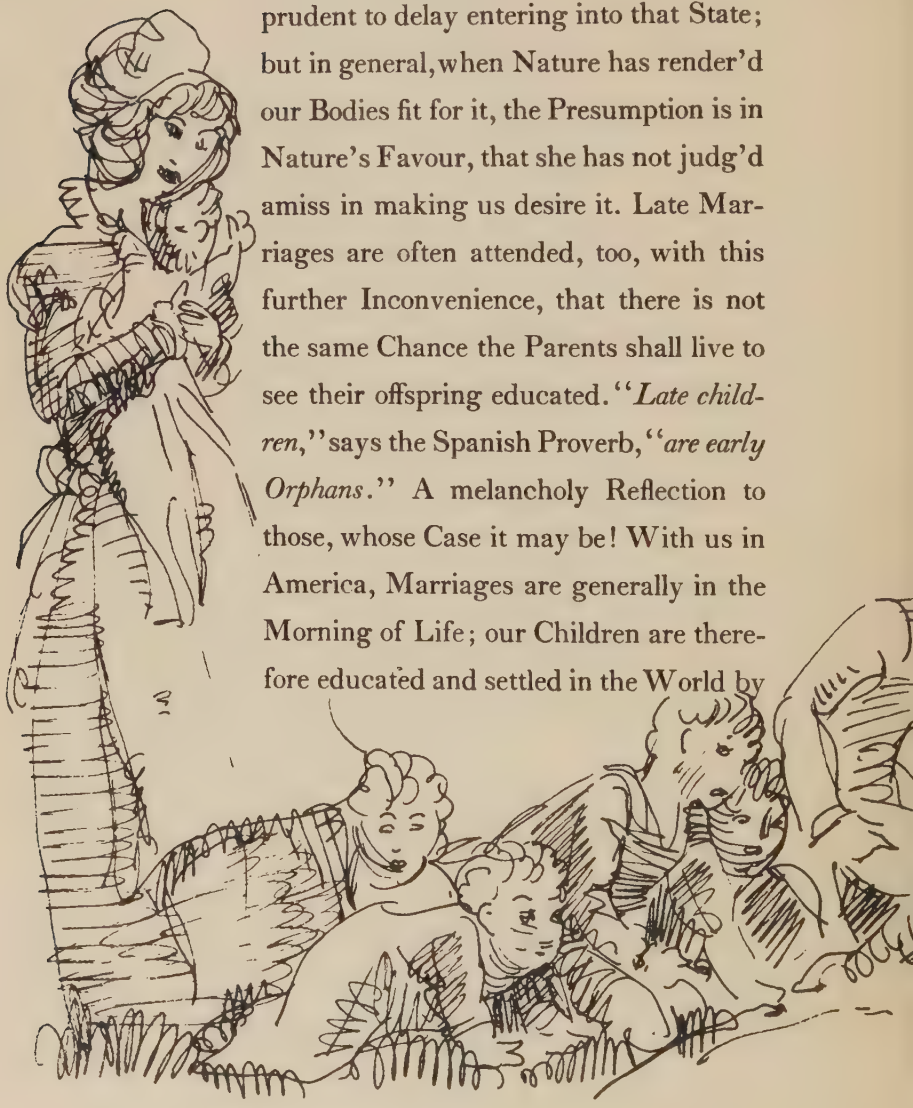
tween us if you please may stand balanced. I assure you it gave me great Pleasure to hear you were married, and into a Family of Reputation. This I learnt from the Public Papers. The Character you give me of your Bride (as it includes every Qualification that in the married State conduces to mutual Happiness) is an Addition to that Pleasure. Had you consulted me, as a Friend, on the Occasion, Youth on both sides I should not have thought any Objection. Indeed, from the Matches that have fallen under my Observation, I am rather inclined to think, that early ones stand the best Chance for Happiness. The Tempers and Habits of young People are not yet

become so stiff and uncomplying, as when more advanced in Life; they form more easily to each other, and hence many Occasions of Disgust are removed. And if Youth has less of that Prudence, that is necessary to conduct a Family, yet the Parents and elder Friends of young married Persons are generally at hand to afford their Advice, which amply supplies that Defect; and, by early Marriage, Youth is sooner form'd to regular and useful Life; & possibly some of those Accidents, Habits, or Connexions, that might have injur'd either the Constitution, or the Reputation, or both, are thereby happily prevented.

Particular Circumstances of particular



Benjamin Franklin

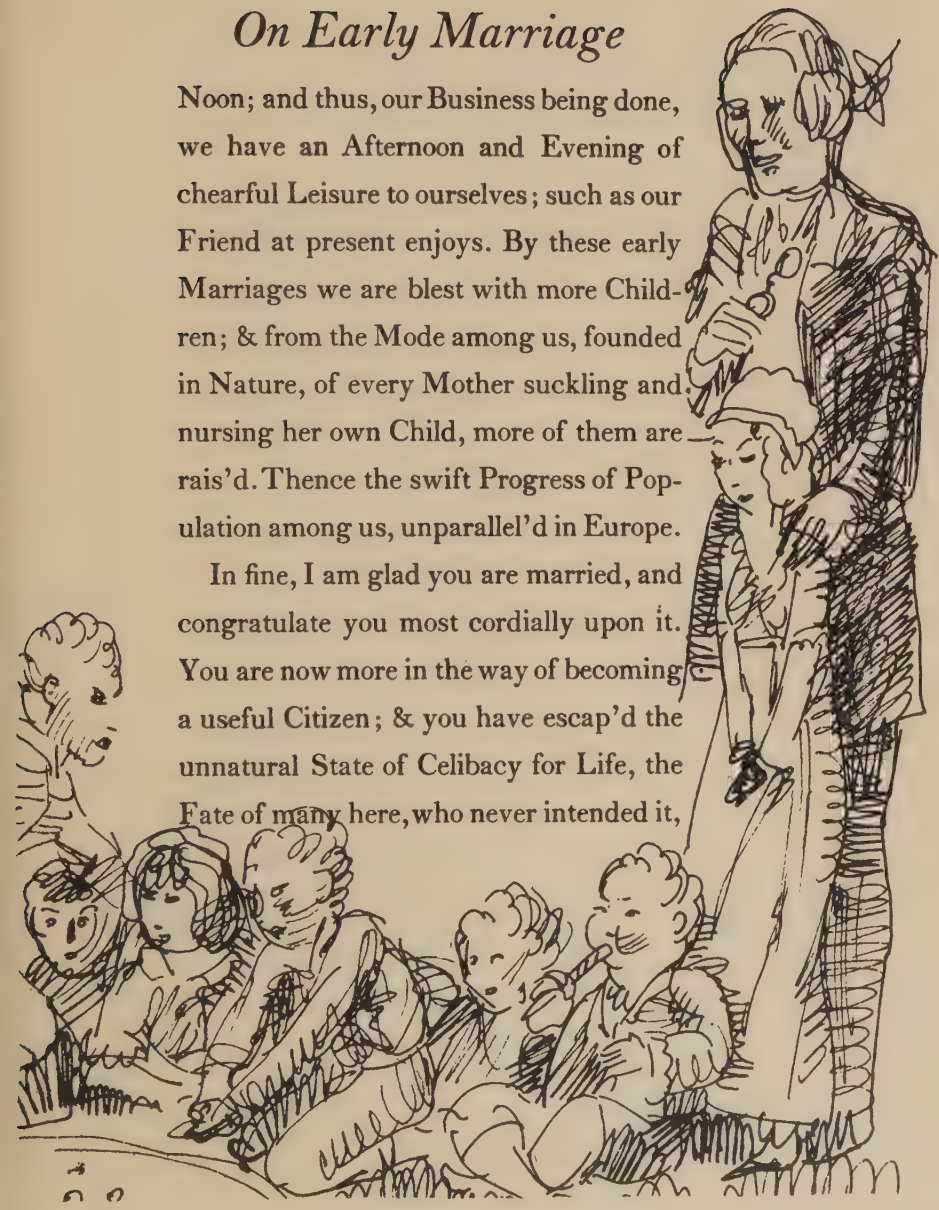


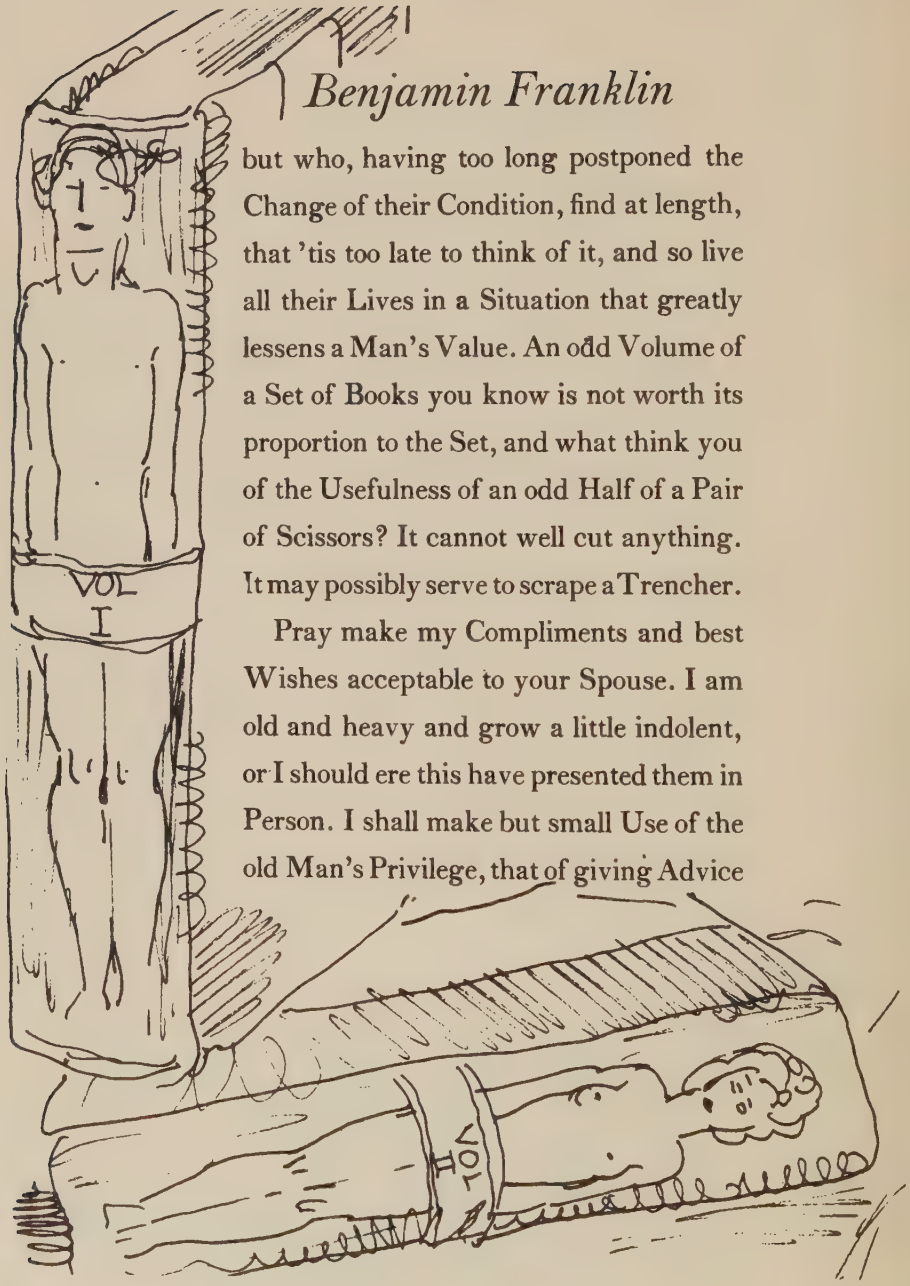
Persons may possibly sometimes make it prudent to delay entering into that State; but in general, when Nature has render'd our Bodies fit for it, the Presumption is in Nature's Favour, that she has not judg'd amiss in making us desire it. Late Marriages are often attended, too, with this further Inconvenience, that there is not the same Chance the Parents shall live to see their offspring educated. "*Late children*," says the Spanish Proverb, "*are early Orphans*." A melancholy Reflection to those, whose Case it may be! With us in America, Marriages are generally in the Morning of Life; our Children are therefore educated and settled in the World by

On Early Marriage

Noon; and thus, our Business being done, we have an Afternoon and Evening of chearful Leisure to ourselves; such as our Friend at present enjoys. By these early Marriages we are blest with more Children; & from the Mode among us, founded in Nature, of every Mother suckling and nursing her own Child, more of them are rais'd. Thence the swift Progress of Population among us, unparallel'd in Europe.

In fine, I am glad you are married, and congratulate you most cordially upon it. You are now more in the way of becoming a useful Citizen; & you have escap'd the unnatural State of Celibacy for Life, the Fate of many here, who never intended it,





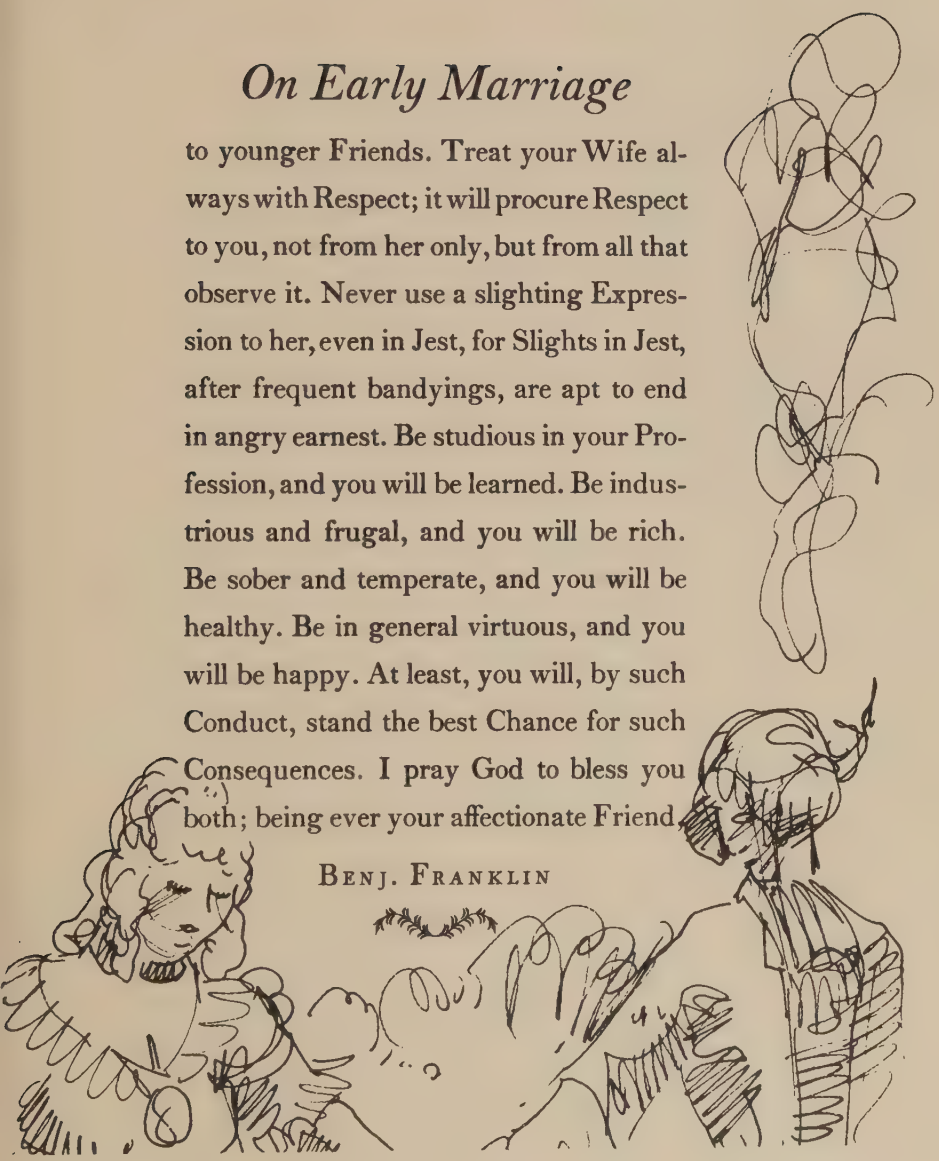
but who, having too long postponed the Change of their Condition, find at length, that 'tis too late to think of it, and so live all their Lives in a Situation that greatly lessens a Man's Value. An odd Volume of a Set of Books you know is not worth its proportion to the Set, and what think you of the Usefulness of an odd Half of a Pair of Scissors? It cannot well cut anything. It may possibly serve to scrape a Trencher.

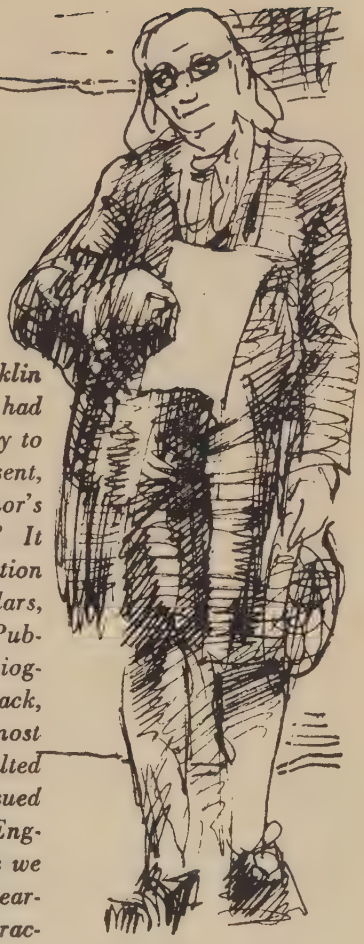
Pray make my Compliments and best Wishes acceptable to your Spouse. I am old and heavy and grow a little indolent, or I should ere this have presented them in Person. I shall make but small Use of the old Man's Privilege, that of giving Advice

On Early Marriage

to younger Friends. Treat your Wife always with Respect; it will procure Respect to you, not from her only, but from all that observe it. Never use a slighting Expression to her, even in Jest, for Slights in Jest, after frequent bandyings, are apt to end in angry earnest. Be studious in your Profession, and you will be learned. Be industrious and frugal, and you will be rich. Be sober and temperate, and you will be healthy. Be in general virtuous, and you will be happy. At least, you will, by such Conduct, stand the best Chance for such Consequences. I pray God to bless you both; being ever your affectionate Friend

BENJ. FRANKLIN

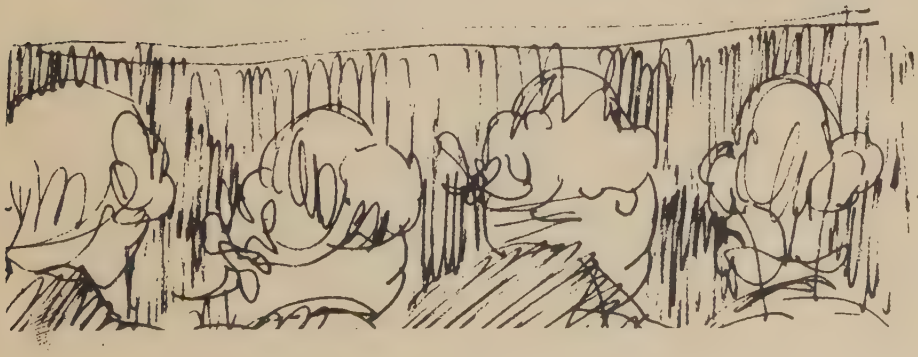


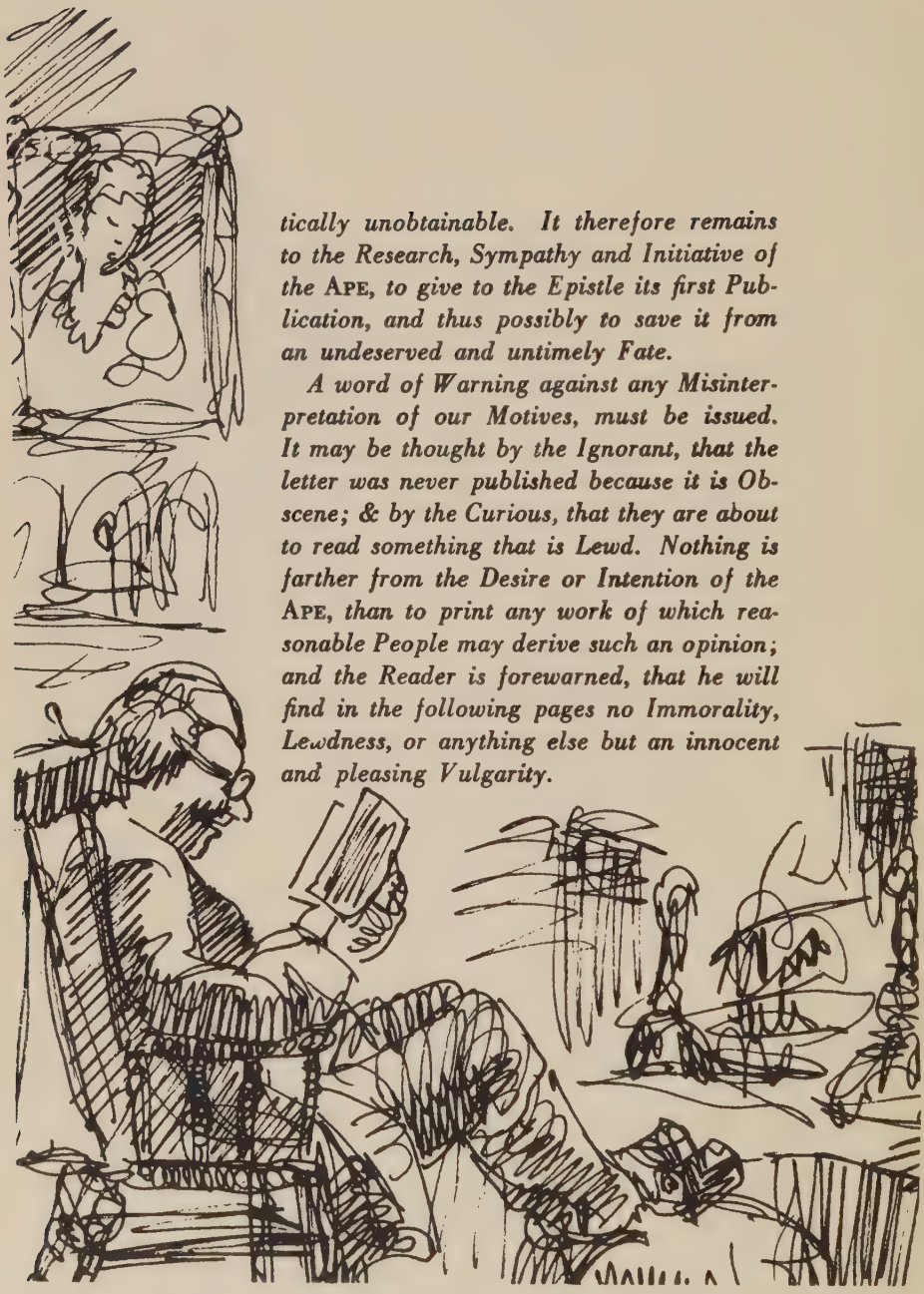


The Publisher

TO THE READER

THIS *Letter was written by Franklin after his scientific Discoveries had been adversely criticized by the Academy to whom it is addressed; but it was never sent, and no doubt sufficiently served its author's purpose in giving "vent to his Griefs." It has been owned by the United States nation since 1881, but, available only to Scholars, has until now escaped the eyes of Publishers. Dark Hints by Franklin's biographers have tainted the air behind its Back, but the Maiden Modesty of even the most contemporary of them, has blushed & halted on the brink of its Release. It was issued privately, in the last century, once in England and once in America; but so far as we can discover, these were its only appearances, were not for sale, and are today prac-*





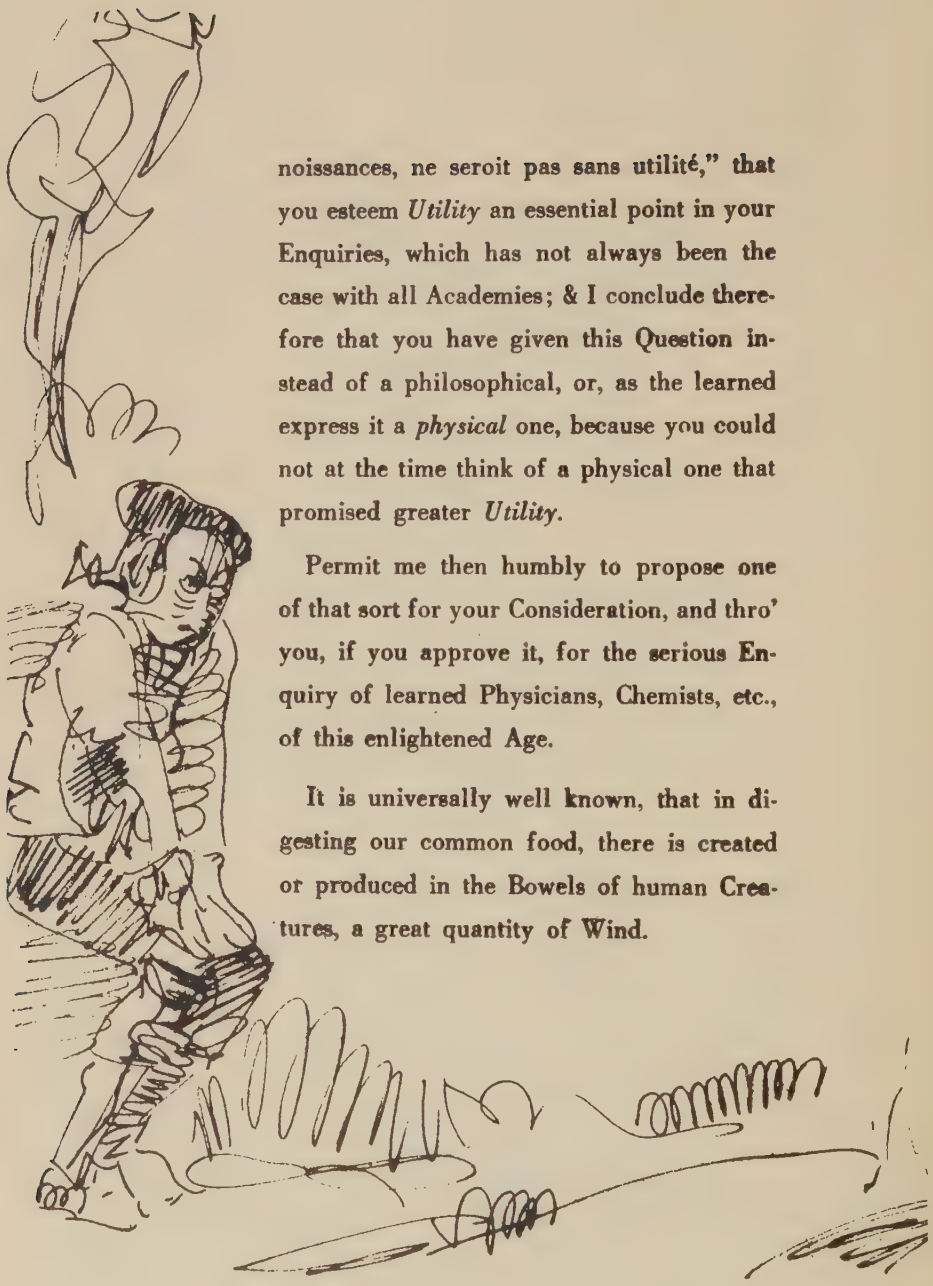
tically unobtainable. It therefore remains to the Research, Sympathy and Initiative of the APE, *to give to the Epistle its first Publication, and thus possibly to save it from an undeserved and untimely Fate.*

A word of Warning against any Misinterpretation of our Motives, must be issued. It may be thought by the Ignorant, that the letter was never published because it is Obscene; & by the Curious, that they are about to read something that is Lewd. Nothing is farther from the Desire or Intention of the APE, *than to print any work of which reasonable People may derive such an opinion; and the Reader is forewarned, that he will find in the following pages no Immorality, Lewdness, or anything else but an innocent and pleasing Vulgarity.*

GENTLEMEN:

I Have perused your late mathematical Prize Question, proposed in lieu of one in Natural Philosophy for the ensuing Year, viz.: "Une Figure quelconque donnée, on demande d'y inscrire le plus grand nombre de fois possible une autre figure plus petite quelconque, qui est aussi donnée"

I was glad to find by these following words, "L'Académie a jugé que cette découverte, en étendant les bornes de nos con-



noissances, ne seroit pas sans utilité," that you esteem *Utility* an essential point in your Enquiries, which has not always been the case with all Academies; & I conclude therefore that you have given this Question instead of a philosophical, or, as the learned express it a *physical* one, because you could not at the time think of a physical one that promised greater *Utility*.

Permit me then humbly to propose one of that sort for your Consideration, and thro' you, if you approve it, for the serious Enquiry of learned Physicians, Chemists, etc., of this enlightened Age.

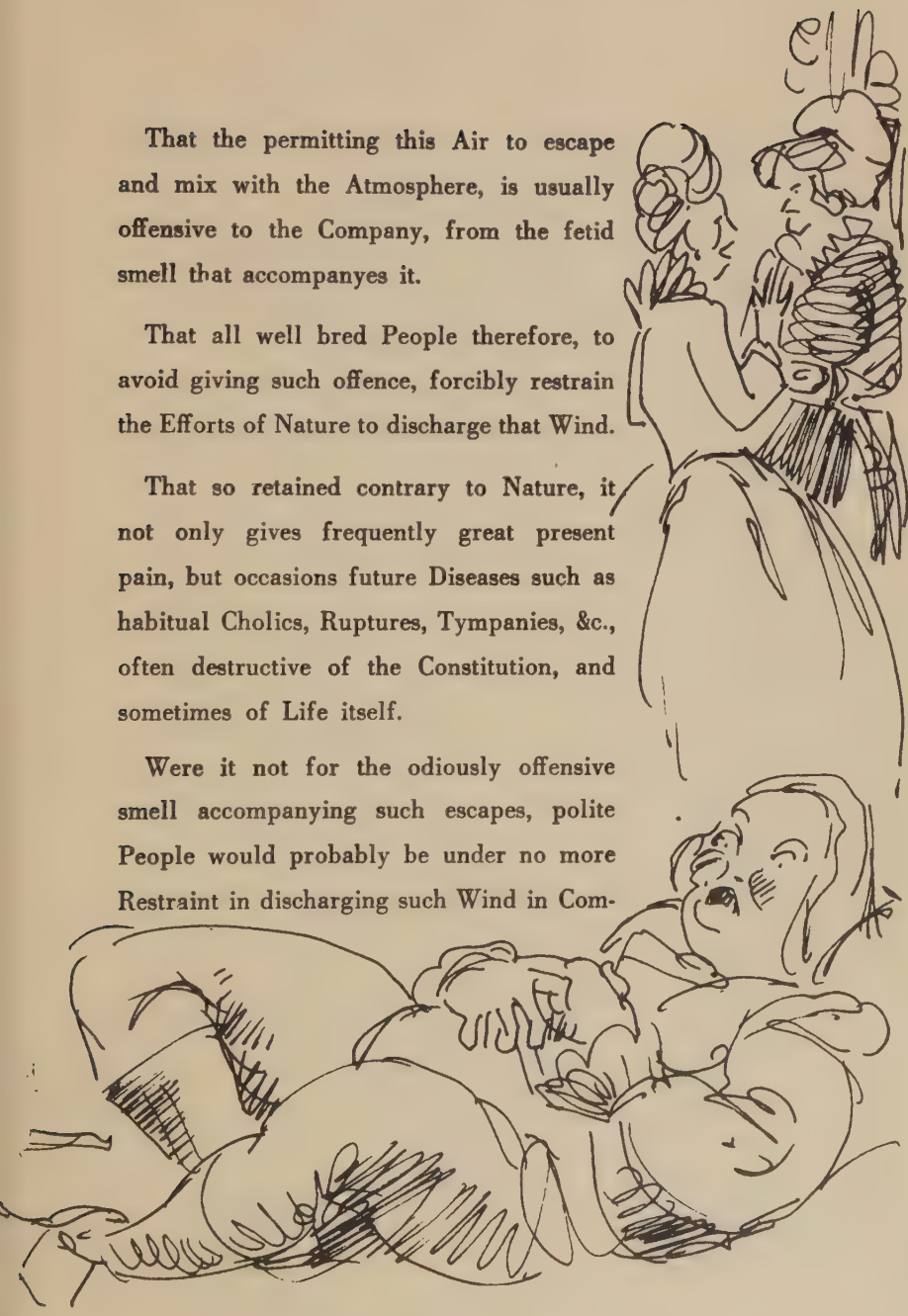
It is universally well known, that in digesting our common food, there is created or produced in the Bowels of human Creatures, a great quantity of Wind.

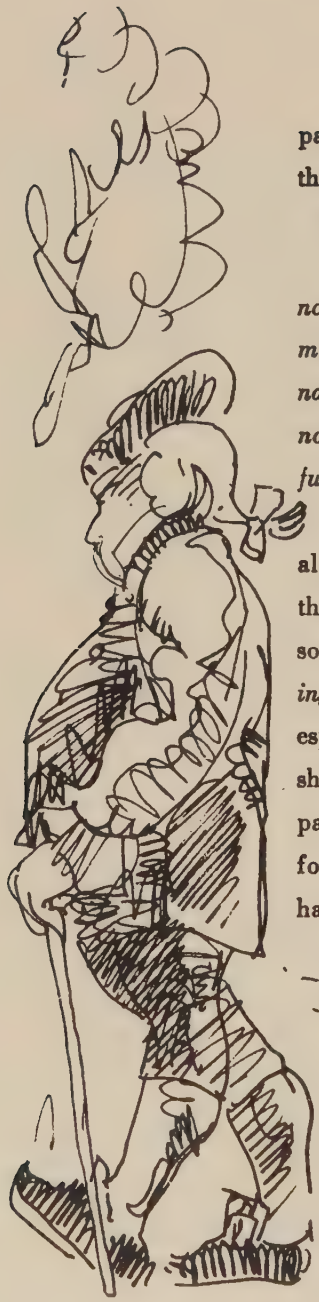
That the permitting this Air to escape and mix with the Atmosphere, is usually offensive to the Company, from the fetid smell that accompanyes it.

That all well bred People therefore, to avoid giving such offence, forcibly restrain the Efforts of Nature to discharge that Wind.

That so retained contrary to Nature, it not only gives frequently great present pain, but occasions future Diseases such as habitual Cholics, Ruptures, Tympanies, &c., often destructive of the Constitution, and sometimes of Life itself.

Were it not for the odiously offensive smell accompanying such escapes, polite People would probably be under no more Restraint in discharging such Wind in Com-





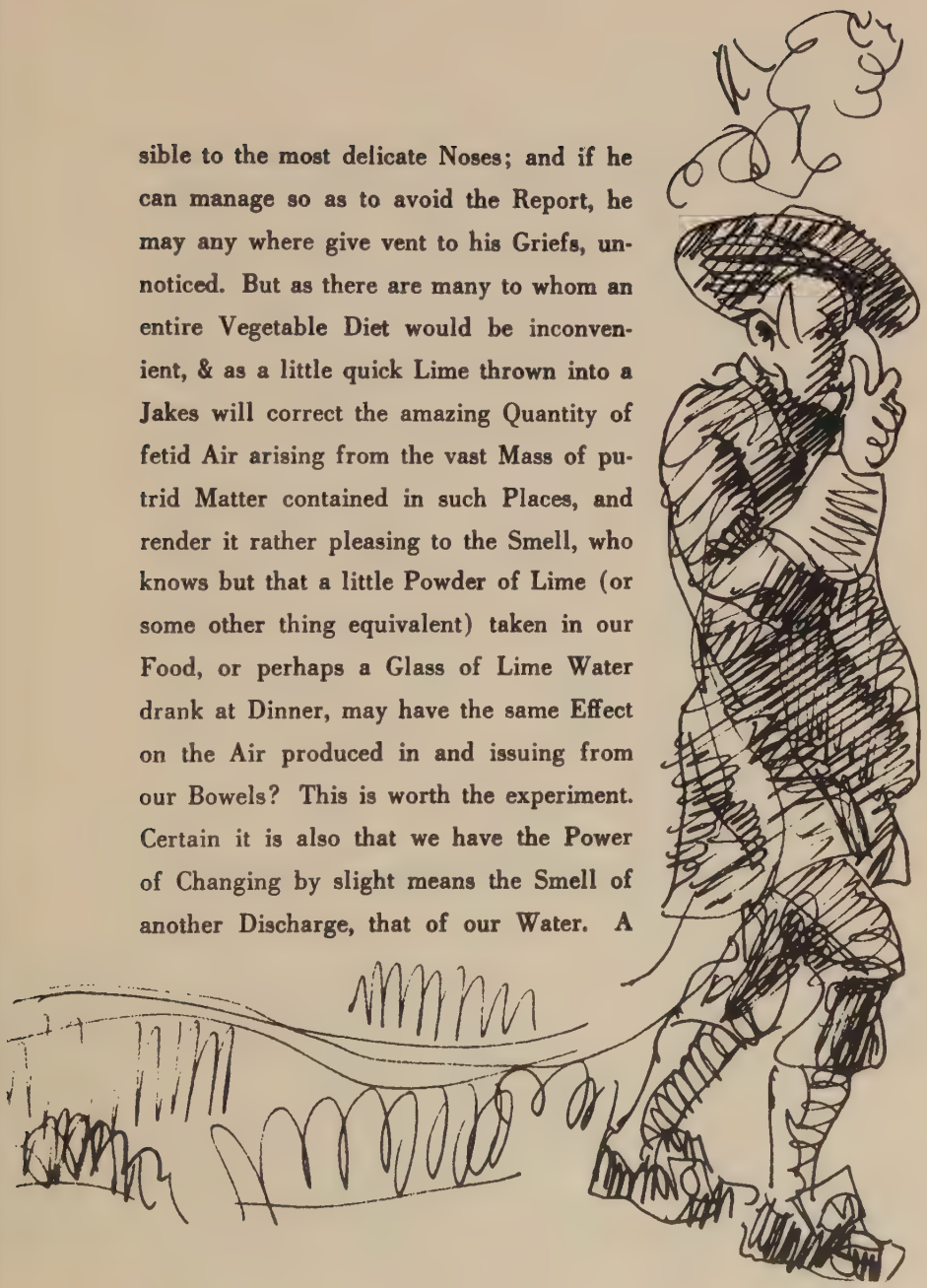
pany, than they are in spitting or in blowing their Noses.

My Prize Question therefore should be:

To discover some Drug, wholesome and not disagreeable, to be mixed with our common food, or sauces, that shall render the natural discharges of Wind from our Bodies not only inoffensive, but agreeable as Perfumes.

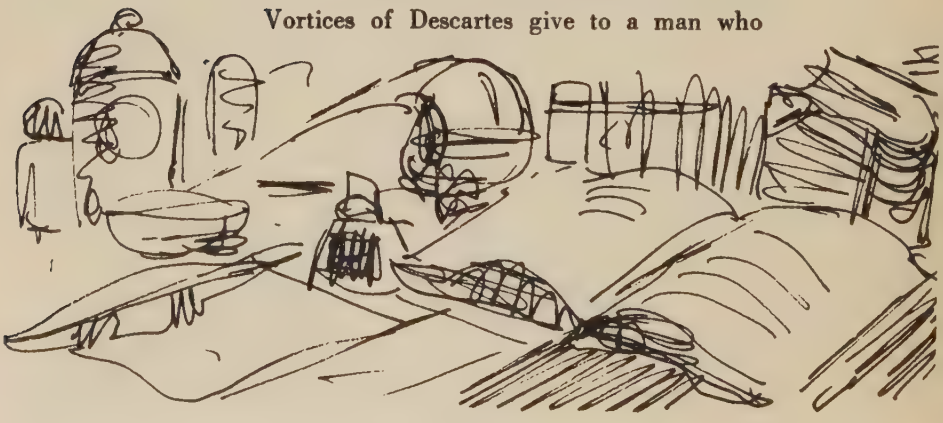
That this is not a Chimerical Project & altogether impossible, may appear from these consideration. That we already have some knowledge of means capable of *varying* that smell. He that dines on stale Flesh, especially with much Addition of Onions, shall be able to afford a Stink that no Company can tolerate; while he that has lived for some time on Vegetables only, shall have that Breath so pure as to be insen-

sible to the most delicate Noses; and if he can manage so as to avoid the Report, he may any where give vent to his Griefs, unnoticed. But as there are many to whom an entire Vegetable Diet would be inconvenient, & as a little quick Lime thrown into a Jakes will correct the amazing Quantity of fetid Air arising from the vast Mass of putrid Matter contained in such Places, and render it rather pleasing to the Smell, who knows but that a little Powder of Lime (or some other thing equivalent) taken in our Food, or perhaps a Glass of Lime Water drank at Dinner, may have the same Effect on the Air produced in and issuing from our Bowels? This is worth the experiment. Certain it is also that we have the Power of Changing by slight means the Smell of another Discharge, that of our Water. A

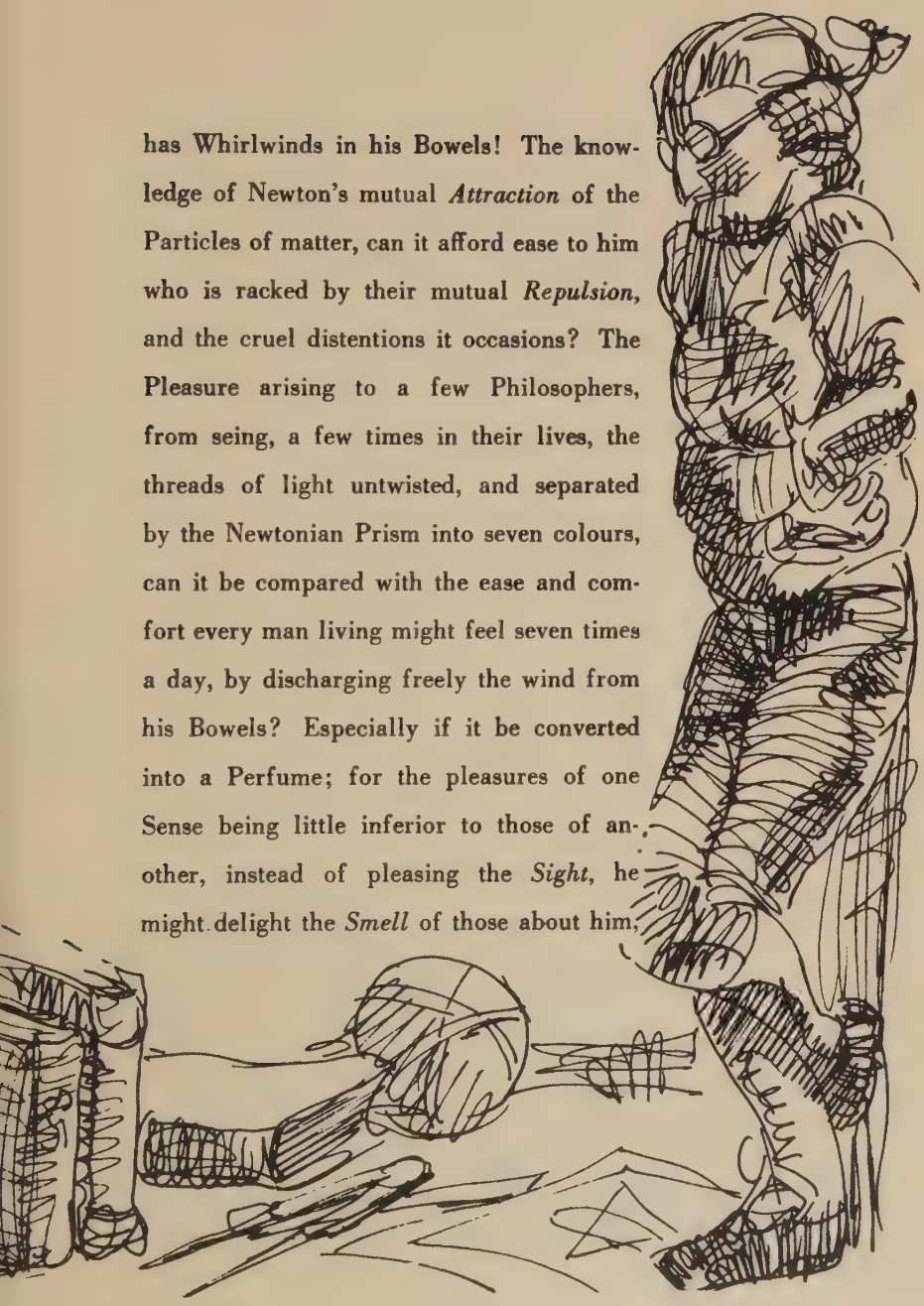


few Stems of Asparagus eaten, shall give our Urine a disagreeable Odour; and a Pill of Turpentine no bigger than a Pea, shall bestow on it the pleasing smell of Violets. And why should it be thought more impossible in Nature, to find means of making a Perfume of our *Wind* than of our *Water?*

For the encouragement of this Enquiry (from the immortal Honour to be reasonably expected by the Inventor) let it be considered of how small importance to Mankind, or to how small a Part of Mankind have been useful those Discoveries in Science that have heretofore made Philosophers famous. Are there twenty Men in Europe this day the happier, or even the easier for any knowledge they have pick'd out of Aristotle? What Comfort can the Vortices of Descartes give to a man who

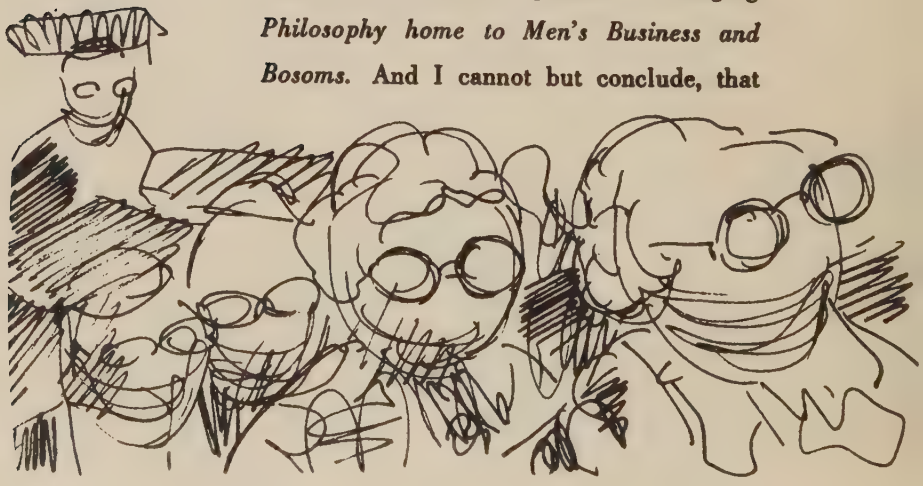


has Whirlwinds in his Bowels! The knowledge of Newton's mutual *Attraction* of the Particles of matter, can it afford ease to him who is racked by their mutual *Repulsion*, and the cruel distentions it occasions? The Pleasure arising to a few Philosophers, from seing, a few times in their lives, the threads of light untwisted, and separated by the Newtonian Prism into seven colours, can it be compared with the ease and comfort every man living might feel seven times a day, by discharging freely the wind from his Bowels? Especially if it be converted into a Perfume; for the pleasures of one Sense being little inferior to those of another, instead of pleasing the *Sight*, he might delight the *Smell* of those about him;



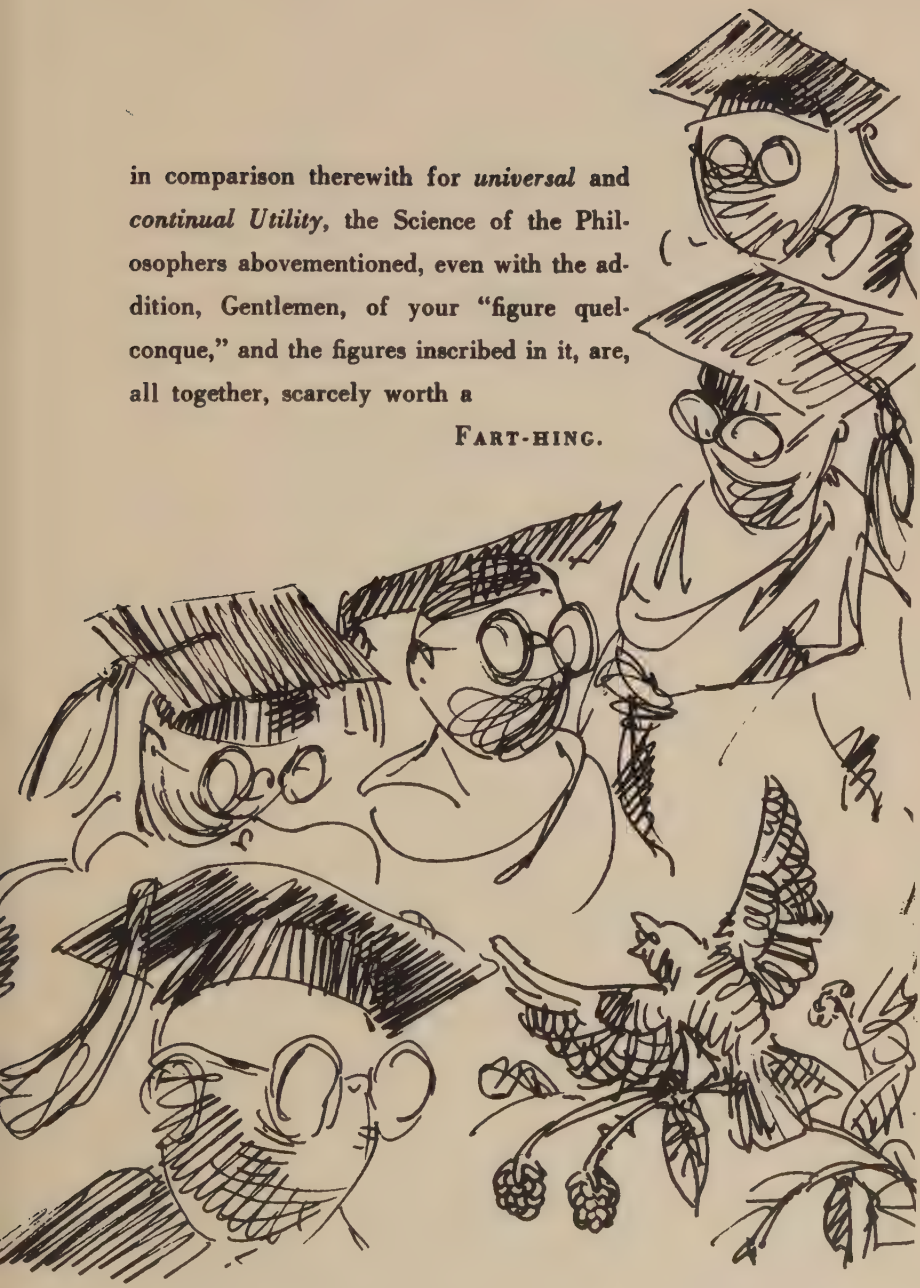
and make numbers happy, which to a benevolent mind must afford infinite satisfaction. The generous Soul, who now endeavours to find out whether the friends he entertains like best Claret or Burgundy, Champagne or Madeira, would then enquire also whether they chose Musk or Lilly, Rose or Bergamont, and provide accordingly. And surely such a Liberty of *ex-pressing* one's *Scent-iments*, & *pleasing one another*, is of infinitely more importance to human happiness than that Liberty of the *Press*, or of *abusing one another*, which the English are so ready to fight & die for.

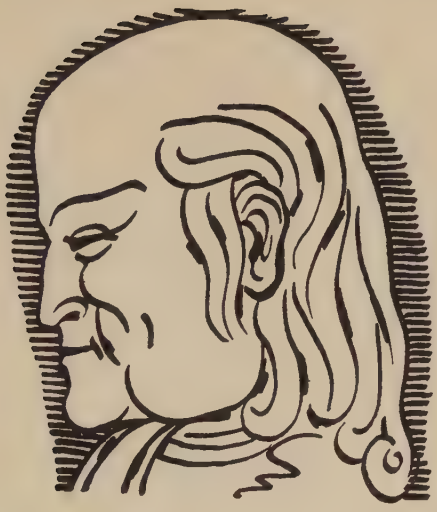
In short, this Invention, if completed, would be, as *Bacon* expresses it, *Bringing Philosophy home to Men's Business and Bosoms.* And I cannot but conclude, that



in comparison therewith for *universal* and *continual Utility*, the Science of the Philosophers abovementioned, even with the addition, Gentlemen, of your "figure quelconque," and the figures inscribed in it, are, all together, scarcely worth a

FART-HING.





BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Satires & Bagatelles

Detroit FINE BOOK CIRCLE *Mcmxxxvii*

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

THAT FRANKLIN'S writing was always subservient to his printing, scientific inquiry, propaganda, diplomacy and other pursuits, has allowed readers to forget how straightforward and graceful it is by itself. The fact that it has always something to say, even at its most playful, will not be against it in a functional era.

Franklin was a moralist (the generations who had to spell out *The Story of the Whistle* and *The Way to Wealth* in school were lost him as readers before they knew his gaier pieces; how much better if they had started with *A Witch Trial* or *Why a Young Man Should Choose an Old Mistress*!) but of a quite different stamp from his New England predecessors and successors. His outlook, even as a cub reporter of sixteen, was humane; his laughter at human foibles indulgent; and his fascination with electricity, aviation, household gadgets, nudism and simplified spelling, sympathetic with our own interests. In short, we should long ago have welcomed him as a fellow-modern, had we been able to know more of him, through easily-obtained editions, than the stimulating glimpse we get in the fortunately ubiquitous *Autobiography*.

This collection of his satires (not all the political ones are included), intimate letters and bagatelles, the little pieces meant for the delectation of his circle of friends, may show a few more readers at least the informal Franklin. The text derives from Smyth, the Livingston Reprints and other basic sources. Some of the French originals are translated for the first time. Capitalization of nouns, in which Franklin was moderately consistent all his life, has not been restored when a standard text was established in late eighteenth-century style. Franklin's punctuation and spelling are retained whenever possible. The notes in the headings will serve as short identifications.

PAUL MCPHARLIN

Ledgelot Wabe
9 November 1936

THE SPEECH OF MISS POLLY BAKER before a Court of Judicature, at Connecticut near Boston in New England; where she was prosecuted the fifth time, for having a Bastard Child: Which influenced the Court to dispense with her Punishment, and which induced one of her Judges to marry her the next Day—by whom she had fifteen Children. *An early piece, the first printing of which has not been discovered.*

MAY IT PLEASE the honourable bench to indulge me in a few words: I am a poor, unhappy woman, who have no money to fee lawyers to plead for me, being hard put to it to get a living. I shall not trouble your honours with long speeches; for I have not the presumption to expect that you may, by any means, be prevailed on to deviate in your Sentence from the law, in my favour. All I humbly hope is, that your honours would charitably move the governor's goodness on my behalf, that my fine may be remitted. This is the fifth time, gentlemen, that I have been dragg'd before your court on the same account; twice I have paid heavy fines, and twice have been brought to publick punishment, for want of money to pay those fines. This may have been agreeable to the laws, and I don't dispute it; but since laws are sometimes unreasonable in themselves, and therefore repealed; and others bear too hard on the subject in particular circumstances, and therefore there is left a power somewhere to dispense with the execution of them; I take the liberty to say, that I think this law, by which I am punished, both unreasonable in itself, and particularly severe with regard to me, who have always lived an inoffensive life in the neighbourhood where I was born, and defy my enemies (if I have any) to say I ever wrong'd any man, woman, or child. Abstracted from the law, I cannot conceive (may it please your honours) what the nature of my offense is. I have brought five fine children into the world, at the risque of my life; I have maintain'd them well by my

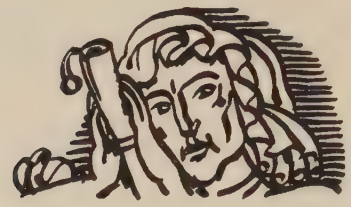
own industry, without burthening the township, and would have done it better, if it had not been for the heavy charges and fines I have paid. Can it be a crime (in the nature of things, I mean) to add to the king's subjects, in a new country, that really wants people? I own it, I should think it rather a praiseworthy than a punishable action. I have debauched no other woman's husband, nor enticed any other youth; these things I never was charg'd with; nor has any one the least cause of complaint against me, unless, perhaps, the ministers of justice, because I have had children without being married, by which they have missed a wedding fee. But can this be a fault of mine? I appeal to your honours. You are pleased to allow I don't want sense; but I must be stupefied to the last degree, not to prefer the honourable state of wedlock to the condition I have lived in. I always was, and still am willing to enter into it; and doubt not my behaving well in it, having all the industry, frugality, fertility, and skill in economy appertaining to a good wife's character. I defy any one to say I ever refused an offer of that sort: on the contrary, I readily consented to the only proposal of marriage that ever was made me, which was when I was a virgin, but too easily confiding in the person's sincerity that made it, I unhappily lost my honour by trusting to his; for he got me with child, and then forsook me.

That very person, you all know, he is now become a magistrate of this country; and I had hopes he would have appeared this day on the bench, and have endeavoured to moderate the Court in my favour; then I should have scorn'd to have mentioned it; but I must now complain of it, as unjust and unequal, that my betrayer and undoer, the first cause of all my faults and miscarriages (if they must be deemed such), should be advanced to honour and power in this government that punishes my misfortunes with stripes and infamy. I should be told, 'tis like, that were there no act of Assembly in the case, the precepts of religion are violated by my transgressions. If mine is a religious offense, leave it to religious punishments.

You have already excluded me from the comforts of your church communion. Is not that sufficient? You believe I have offended heaven, and must suffer eternal fire: Will not that be sufficient? What need is there then of your additional fines and whipping? I own I do not think as you do, for, if I thought what you call a sin was really such, I could not presumptuously commit it. But, how can it be believed that heaven is angry at my having children, when to the little done by me towards it, God has been pleased to add his divine skill and admirable workmanship in the formation of their bodies, and crowned the whole by furnishing them with rational and immortal souls?

Forgive me, gentlemen, if I talk a little extravagantly on these matters; I am no divine, but if you, gentlemen, must be making laws, do not turn natural and useful actions into crimes by your prohibitions. But take into your wise consideration the great and growing number of batchelors in the country, many of whom, from the mean fear of the expences of a family, have never sincerely and honourably courted a woman in their lives; and by their manner of living leave unproduced (which is little better than murder) hundreds of their posterity to the thousandth generation. Is not this a greater offense against the publick good than mine? Compel them, then, by law, either to marriage, or to pay double the fine of fornication every year. What must poor young women do, whom customs and nature forbid to solicit the men, and who cannot force themselves upon husbands, when the laws take no care to provide them any, and yet severely punish them if they do their duty without them: the duty of the first and great command of nature and nature's God, *encrease and multiply;* a duty, from the steady performance of which nothing has been able to deter me, but for its sake I have hazarded the loss of the publick esteem, and have frequently endured publick disgrace and punishment; and therefore ought, in my humble opinion, instead of a whipping, to have a statue erected to my memory.

INSURANCE AGAINST SPINSTERHOOD. *A letter to the editor of the* New England Courant *of 13 August 1722, from a prototype of advice-to-the-lovelorn columnists. Franklin was sixteen.*



SIR, FROM a natural Compassion to my Fellow-Creatures, I have sometimes been betray'd into Tears at the Sight of an Object of Charity, who by a bear Relation of his Circumstances, seem'd to demand the assistance of those about him. The following Petition represents in so lively a Manner the forlorn State of a Virgin well stricken in Years and Repentance, that I cannot forbear publishing it at this Time, with some Advice to the Petitioner.

To Mrs. Silence Dogood.

The Humble Petition of Margaret Aftercast,

SHEWETH, 1. THAT your Petitioner being puff'd up in her younger Years with a numerous Train of Humble Servants, had the Vanity to think, that her extraordinary Wit and Beauty would continually recommend her to the Esteem of the Gallants; and therefore as soon as it came to be publickly known that any Gentleman address'd her, he was immediately discarded.

2. THAT several of your Petitioners Humble Servants, who upon their being rejected by her, were, to all Appearance in a dying Condition, have since recover'd their Health, and been several Years married, to the great Surprize and Grief of your Petitioner, who parted with them upon no other Conditions, but that they should die or run distracted for her, as several of them faithfully promised to do.

3. THAT Your Petitioner finding her self disappointed in and neglected by her former Adorers, and no new Offers appearing for some Years past, she has been industriously contracting Acquaintance with several Families in Town and Country, where any young Gentlemen or Widowers have resided, and endeavour'd to appear as conversable as possible before them: She has likewise been a strict Observer of the Fashion, and always appear'd well dress'd. And the better to restore her decay'd Beauty, she has consum'd above Fifty Pound's Worth of the most approved *Cosmeticks*. But all won't do.

YOUR Petitioner therefore most humbly prays, That you would be pleased to form a Project for the Relief of all those penitent Mortals of the fair Sex, that are like to be punished with their Virginity until old Age, for the Pride and Insolence of their Youth.

And your Petitioner (as in Duty bound) shall ever pray, &c. *Margaret Aftercast.*

WERE I endow'd with the Faculty of Matchmaking, it should be improv'd for the Benefit of Mrs. *Margaret* and others in her Condition: but since my extream Modesty and Taciturnity, forbids an Attempt of this Nature, I would advise them to relieve themselves in a Method of *Friendly Society;* and that already publish'd for Widows, I conceive would be a very proper Proposal for them, whereby every single Woman, upon full Proof given of her continuing a Virgin for the Space of Eighteen Years, (dating her Virginity from the Age of Twelve,) should be entituled to 500 *l.* in ready Cash.

BUT then it will be necessary to make the following Exceptions.

1. THAT no Woman shall be admitted into the Society after she is Twenty Five Years old, who has made a Practice of entertaining and discarding Humble Servants, without sufficient Reason for so doing, until she has manifested her Repentance in Writing under her Hand.

2. NO Member of the Society who has declar'd before two credible Witnesses, *That it is well known she has refus'd several good Offers since the Time of her Subscribing,* shall be entituled to the 500 *l.* when she comes of Age; that is to say, *Thirty Years.*

3. NO Woman, who after claiming and receiving, has had the good Fortune to marry, shall entertain any Company with Encomiums on her Husband, above the Space of one Hour at a Time, upon Pain of returning one half the Money into the Office, for the first Offence; and upon the second Offence to return the Remainder. *I am, SIR,*

Your Humble Servant,

SILENCE DOGOOD.

ON DRINKING AND DRUNKENNESS. *A letter to the editor of the* New England Courant *of 3 September 1722.*

SIR, IT is no unprofitable tho' unpleasant Pursuit, diligently to inspect and consider the Manners & Conversation of Men, who, insensible of the greatest Enjoyments of humane Life, abandon themselves to Vice from a false Notion of *Pleasure* and *good Fellowship.* A true and natural Representation of any Enormity, is often the best Argument against it and Means of removing it, when the most severe Reprehensions alone, are found ineffectual.

I WOULD in this Letter improve the little Observation I have made on the Vice of *Drunkeness,* the better to reclaim the *good Fellows* who usually pay the Devotions of the Evening to *Bacchus.*

I DOUBT not but *moderate Drinking* has been improv'd for the Diffusion of Knowledge among the ingenious Part of

Mankind, who want the Talent of a ready Utterance, in order to discover the Conceptions of their Minds in an entertaining and intelligible Manner. 'Tis true, drinking does not *improve* our Faculties, but it enables us to use them; and therefore I conclude, that much Study and Experience, and a little Liquor, are of absolute Necessity for some Tempers, in order to make them accomplish'd Orators. *Dic. Ponder* discovers an excellent Judgment when he is inspir'd with a Glass or two of *Claret,* but he passes for a Fool among those of small Observation, who never saw him the better for Drink. And here it will not be improper to observe, That the moderate Use of Liquor, and a well plac'd and well regulated Anger, often produce this same Effect; and some who cannot ordinarily talk but in broken Sentences and false Grammar, do in the Heat of Passion express themselves with as much Eloquence as Warmth. Hence it is that my own Sex are generally the most eloquent, because the most passionate. "It has been said in the Praise of some Men," (says an ingenious Author,) "that they could talk whole Hours together upon any thing; but it must be owned to the Honour of the other Sex, that there are many among them who can talk whole Hours together upon Nothing. I have known a Woman branch out into a long extempore Dissertation on the Edging of a Petticoat, and chide her Servant for breaking a China Cup, in all the Figures of Rhetorick."

BUT after all it must be consider'd, that no Pleasure can give Satisfaction or prove advantageous to a *reasonable Mind,* which is not attended with the *Restraints of Reason.* Enjoyment is not to be found by Excess in any sensual Gratification; but on the contrary, the immoderate Cravings of the Voluptuary, are always succeeded with Loathing and a palled Apetite. What Pleasure can the Drunkard have in the Reflection, that, while in his Cups, he retain'd only the Shape of a Man, and acted the Part of a Beast; or that from reasonable Discourse a few Minutes before, he descended to Impertinence and Nonsense?

I CANNOT pretend to account for the different Effects of Liquor on Persons of different Dispositions, who are guilty of Excess in the Use of it. 'Tis strange to see Men of a regular Conversation become rakish and profane when intoxicated with Drink, and yet more surprizing to observe, that some who appear to be the most profligate Wretches when sober, become mighty religious in the Cups, and will then, and at no other Time address their Maker, but when they are destitute of Reason, and actually affronting him. Some shrink in the Wetting, and others swell to such an unusual Bulk in their Imaginations, that they can in an Instant understand all Arts and Sciences, by the liberal Education of a little vivifying *Punch,* or a sufficient Quantity of other exhilerating Liquor.

AND as the Effects of Liquor are various, so are the Characters given to its Devourers. It argues some Shame in the Drunkards themselves, in that they have invented numberless Words and Phrases to cover their Folly, whose proper Significations are harmless, or have no Signification at all. They are seldom known to be *drunk,* tho they are very often, *boozey, cogey, tipsey, fox'd, merry, mellow, fuddl'd, groatable, Confoundedly cut, See two Moons,* are *Among the Philistines, In a very good Humour, See the Sun,* or, *The Sun has shone upon them;* they *Clip the King's English,* are *Almost froze, Feavourish, In their Altitudes, Pretty well enter'd,* &c. In short, every Day produces some new Word or Phrase which might be added to the Vocabulary of the *Tiplers*: But I have chose to mention these few, because if at any Time a Man of Sobriety and Temperance happens to *cut himself confoundedly,* or is *almost froze,* or *feavourish,* or accidentally *sees the Sun,* &c. he may escape the Imputation of being *drunk,* when his Misfortune comes to be related.

I am SIR,

Your Humble Servant,

SILENCE DOGOOD.

A DRINKING SONG. *Translated from a letter in French of 1779 to the Abbé de la Roche.*

I HAVE GONE through, my dear friend, the little book of verse of M. Helvétius, of which you made me a gift. The poem on *Happiness* has given me much pleasure, and reminded me of a little drinking song, which I made forty years ago on the same subject, and which had almost the same form, and several of the same thoughts, but rather clumsily expressed. Here it is.

Singer. Fair Venus calls; her voice obey,
In beauty's arms spend night and day.
The joys of love all joys excel,
And loving's certainly doing well.

Chorus. Oh! no!
Not so!
For honest souls know,
Friends and a bottle still bear the bell.

Singer. Then let us get money, like bees lay up honey;
We'll build us new hives, and store each cell.
The sight of our treasure shall yield us great pleasure;
We'll count it, and chink it, and jingle it well.

Chorus. Oh! no! &c.

Singer. If this does not fit ye, let's govern the city,
In power is pleasure no tongue can tell;
By crowds though you're teased, your pride shall be pleased,
And this can make Lucifer happy in hell!

Chorus. Oh! no! &c.

Singer. Then toss off your glasses, and scorn the dull asses,
Who, missing the kernel, still gnaw the shell;
What's love, rule and riches? Wise Solomon teaches,
They're vanity, vanity, vanity still.

Chorus. That's true;
He knew;
He's tried them all through;
Friends and a bottle still bore the bell.

. . . The phrase "bear the bell" means, *win the prize.*

I have often remarked, in reading the works of M. Helvétius, that although we were born and brought up in two countries so far apart, we often hit upon the same thoughts; and it is a flattering reflection for me, that we loved the same studies, and insofar as we both knew them, the same friends, *and the same woman.*

REFLECTIONS ON WINE. *Translated from a letter in French of 1779 to the Abbé Morellet.*

YOU HAVE OFTEN cheered me, my very dear friend, by your excellent drinking songs; in exchange, I wish to edify you by some reflections Christian, moral and philosophical, upon the same subject.

In vino veritas, says the sage. *Truth is in wine.* Before Noah, therefore, men, having nothing but water to drink, could not find out the truth. Thus they erred, they became dreadfully wicked, and they were fittingly exterminated by the water they liked to drink.

Goodman Noah, having seen that all his contemporaries had perished by this unwholesome drink, took an aversion to it, and God, to quench his thirst, created the grape, and revealed the art of making wine from it. By means of this liquor he discovered many and many a truth; and since his time, the word *divine* has been used, originally meaning *divination by wine.* So the patriarch Joseph pretended to prophesy by means of a cup or glass of wine; a liquor which

has received this name to show that it was not a human invention, but di*vine*; (another proof of the antiquity of the French language . . .) Thus, from that time, all excellent things, even Gods, have been called di*vine* or di*vin*ities.

The changing of the water to wine at the marriage of Cana has been spoken of as a miracle. But this change is made every day under our very eyes by the bounty of God. See how the rain falls from heaven upon our vineyards, entering the roots of the vines to be changed into wine; a constant proof that God loves us and likes to see us happy. That particular miracle was worked only to hasten the process, under circumstances of sudden need which demanded it.

'Tis true that God also instructed men to mix wine with water. But what kind of water? Fire-water, or brandy. So that they might, at need, work a miracle of Cana and make ordinary water into that excellent sort of wine called *punch!*

My Christian brother, be benevolent and beneficent like Him, and do not spoil His good work. He has made wine to cheer us. When you see your neighbour at table pour wine into his glass, do not hasten to pour in water. Why water *truth?* Probably your neighbour knows better than you what is right for him. Perhaps he does not like water; perhaps he wants to put in only a few drops, in order to comply with the fashion; perhaps he does not wish another to observe how little of it he puts into his glass. Offer water, then, only to infants; it is a false politeness, and very unhandy. As a man of the world I say this to you; and I finish as I began, in a good Christian spirit, by making you a very important religious observation, drawn from Holy Scripture; know that the apostle Paul seriously counselled Timothy to put wine into his water for health; but that not a one of the apostles, nor of the holy fathers, ever counselled us to put *water into wine!*

A NIGHT RAMBLE IN BOSTON. *A letter to the editor of the* New England Courant *of 17 September 1722.*

SIR, IN PERSONS of a contemplative Disposition, the most indifferent Things provoke the Exercise of the Imagination; and the Satisfactions which often arise to them thereby, are a certain Relief to the Labour of the Mind (when it has been intensely fix'd on more substantial Subjects) as well as to that of the Body.

IN one of the late pleasant Moon-light Evenings, I so far indulg'd in my self the Humour of the Town in walking abroad, as to continue from my Lodgings two or three Hours later than usual, & was pleas'd beyond Expectation before my Return. Here I found various Company to observe, and various Discourse to attend to. I met indeed with the common Fate of *Listeners,* (who *hear no good of themselves,*) but from a Consciousness of my Innocence, receiv'd it with a Satisfaction beyond what the Love of Flattery and the Daubings of a Parasite could produce. The Company who rally'd me were about Twenty in Number, of both Sexes; and tho' the *Confusion of Tongues* (like that of *Babel)* which always happens among so many impetuous Talkers, render'd their Discourse not so intelligible as I could wish, I learnt thus much, That one of the Females pretended to know me, from some Discourse she had heard at a certain House before the Publication of one of my Letters; adding, *That I was a Person of an ill Character, and kept a criminal Correspondence with a Gentleman who assisted me in Writing.* One of the Gallants clear'd me of this random Charge, by saying, *That tho' I wrote in the Character of a Woman, he knew me to be a Man; But,* continu'd he, *he has more need of endeavouring a Reformation in himself, than spending his Wit in satyrizing others.*

I HAD no sooner left this Set of Ramblers, but I met a Crowd of *Tarpolins* and their Doxies, link'd to each other by the Arms, who ran (by their own Account) after the Rate of *Six Knots an Hour,* and bent their Course towards the *Com-*

mon. Their eager and amorous Emotions of Body, occasion'd by taking their Mistresses *in Tow,* they call'd *wild Steerage:* And as a Pair of them happen'd to trip and come to the Ground, the Company were call'd upon to *bring to,* for that *Jack* and *Betty* were *founder'd.* But this Fleet were not less comical or irregular in their Progress than a Company of Females I soon after came up with, who, by throwing their Heads to the Right and Left, at every one who pass'd by them, I concluded came out with no other Design than to revive the Spirit of Love in Disappointed Batchelors, and expose themselves to Sale to the first Bidder.

BUT it would take up too much Room in your Paper to mention all the Occasions of Diversion I met with in this Night's Ramble. As it grew later, I observed, that many pensive Youths with down looks and a slow Pace, would be ever now and then crying out on the Cruelty of their Mistresses; others with a more rapid Pace and cheerful Air, would be swinging their Canes, and clapping their Cheeks, and whispering at certain Intervals, *I'm certain I shall have her! This is more than I expected! How charmingly she talks!* &c.

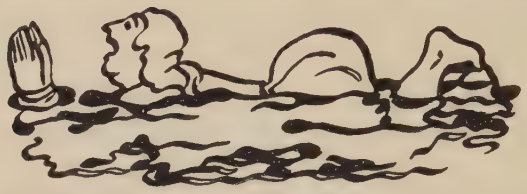
UPON the whole I conclude, That our *Night-Walkers* are a Set of People, who contribute very much to the Health and Satisfaction of those who have been fatigu'd with Business or Study, and occasionally observe their pretty Gestures and Impertinencies. But among Men of Business, the *Shoemakers,* and other Dealers in Leather, are doubly oblig'd to them, inasmuch as they exceedingly promote the Consumption of their Ware: And I have heard of a *Shoemaker,* who being ask'd by a noted Rambler, *Whether he could tell how long her Shoes would last;* very prettily answer'd, *That he knew how many Days she might wear them, but not how many Nights; because they were then put to a more violent and irregular Service than when she employ'd her self in the common Affairs of the House.*

I am, SIR,

Your Humble Servant,

SILENCE DOGOOD.

A WITCH TRIAL AT MOUNT HOLLY. *From the* Pennsylvania Gazette *of 22 October 1730, purporting to be news from Burlington, New Jersey.*



SATURDAY LAST, at Mount-Holly, about 8 Miles from this Place near 300 People were gathered together to see an Experiment or two tried on some Persons accused of Witchcraft. It seems the Accused had been charged with making their Neighbours' Sheep dance in an uncommon Manner, and with causing Hogs to speak and sing Psalms, etc., to the great Terror and Amazement of the king's good and peaceable Subjects in this Province; and the Accusers, being very positive that if the Accused were weighed in Scales against a Bible, the Bible would prove too heavy for them; or that, if they were bound and put into the River they would swim; the said Accused, desirous to make Innocence appear, voluntarily offered to undergo the said Trials if 2 of the most violent of their Accusers would be tried with them. Accordingly the Time and Place was agreed on and advertised about the Country; The Accusers were 1 Man and 1 Woman: and the Accused the same. The Parties being met and the People got together, a grand Consultation was held, before they proceeded to Trial; in which it was agreed to use the Scales first, and a Committee of Men were appointed to search the Men, and a Committee of Women to search the Women, to see if they had any Thing of Weight about them, particularly Pins. After the Scrutiny was over a huge great Bible belonging to the Justice of the Place was provided, and a Lane through the Populace was made from the Justice's House to the Scales, which were fixed on a Gallows erected for that Purpose opposite to the House, that the Justice's Wife and the rest of the

Ladies might see the Trial without coming amongst the Mob, and after the Manner of Moorfields a large Ring was also made. Then came out of the House a grave, tall Man carrying the Holy Writ before the supposed Wizard etc, (as solemnly as the Sword-bearer of London before the Lord Mayor) the Wizard was first put in the Scale, and over him was read a Chapter out of the Books of Moses, and then the Bible was put in the other Scale, (which, being kept down before) was immediately let go; but, to the great Surprize of the Spectators, Flesh and Bones came down plump, and outweighed that great good Book by abundance. After the same Manner the others were served, and their Lumps of Mortality severally were too heavy for Moses and all the Prophets and Apostles. This being over, the Accusers and the rest of the Mob, not satisfied with this Experiment, would have the Trial by Water. Accordingly ā most solemn Procession was made to the Mill-pond, where both Accused and Accusers being stripped (saving only to the Women their Shifts) were bound Hand and Foot and severally placed in the Water, lengthways, from the Side of a Barge or Flat, having for Security only a Rope about the Middle of each, which was held by some in the Flat. The accused man being thin and spare with some Difficulty began to sink at last; but the rest, every one of them, swam very light upon the Water. A Sailor in the Flat jump'd out upon the Back of the Man accused thinking to drive him down to the Bottom; but the Person bound, without any Help, came up some time before the other. The Woman Accuser being told that she did not sink, would be duck'd a second Time; when she swam again as light as before. Upon which she declared, That she believed the Accused had bewitched her to make her so light, and that she would be duck'd again a Hundred Times but she would duck the Devil out of her. The Accused Man, being surpriz'd at his own Swimming, was not so confident of his Innocence as before, but said, 'If I am a Witch, it is more than I know.' The more thinking Part of the Spectators were of Opinion that any Per-

son so bound and placed in the Water (unless they were mere Skin and Bones) would swim, till their Breath was gone, and their Lungs fill'd with Water. But it being the general Belief of the Populace that the Women's shifts and the Garters with which they were bound help'd to support them, it is said they are to be tried again the next warm Weather, naked.

KEEPING UP WITH THE JONESES. *A letter to the editor of the* Pennsylvania Gazette *of 10 July 1732.*

MR. GAZETTEER, I am an honest Tradesman, who never meant Harm to anyBody. My Affairs went on smoothly while a Batchelor; but of late I have met with some Difficulties, of which I take the Freedom to give you an Account.

About the Time I first address'd my present Spouse, her Father gave out in Speeches, that if she married a Man he liked, he would give with her £200 on the Day of Marriage. 'Tis true he never said so to me, but he always receiv'd me very kindly at his House, and openly countenanc'd my Courtship. I form'd several fine Schemes what to do with this same £200, and in some Measure neglected my Business on that Account: But unluckily it came to pass, that when the old Gentleman saw I was pretty well engag'd, and that the Match was too far gone to be easily broke off; he, without any Reason given, grew very angry, forbid me the House, and told his Daughter, that if she married me he would not give her a Farthing. However, (as he foresaw) we were not to be disappointed in that Manner, but, having stole a Wedding, I took her home to my House, where we were not in quite so poor a Condition as the Couple describ'd in the Scotch Song, who had

"Neither Pot nor Pan,
But four bare Legs together,"

for I had a House tolerably furnished for an ordinary Man before. No thanks to Dad, who, I understand, was very much pleased with his politick Management. And I have since

learn'd, that there are other old Curmudgeons (so called) besides him, who have this Trick to marry their Daughters, and yet keep what they might well spare, till they can keep it no longer; But this by way of Digression; a Word to the Wise is enough.

I soon saw, that with Care and Industry we might live tolerably easy and in Credit with our Neighbours; But my Wife had a strong Inclination to be a Gentlewoman. In Consequence of this, my old-fashioned Looking-Glass was one Day broke, as she said, *No Mortal could tell which way.* However, since we could not be without a Glass in the Room, 'My Dear,' says she, 'we may as well buy a large fashionable One, that Mr. Such-a-one has to sell; It will cost but little more than a common Glass, and will be much handsomer and more creditable.' Accordingly, the Glass was bought and hung against the Wall: But in a Week's time I was made sensible, by little and little, that *the Table was by no means suitable to such a Glass.* And a more proper Table being procur'd, my Spouse, who was an excellent Contriver, inform'd me where we might have very handsome Chairs *in the Way;* and thus by Degress I found all my old Furniture stow'd up in the Garret, and every thing below alter'd for the better.

Had we stopp'd here, it might have done well enough; but my Wife being entertain'd with Tea by the Good Women she visited, we could do no less than the like when they visited us; and so we got a Tea-Table with all its Appurtenances of China and Silver. Then my Spouse unfortunately overwork'd herself in washing the House, so that we could do no longer without a Maid. Besides this, it happened frequently, that when I came home at One, the Dinner was but just put in the Pot, and *my Dear thought really it had been but Eleven*: At other Times, when I came at the same Hour, *She wondered I would stay so long, for Dinner was ready and had waited for me these two Hours.* These Irregularities occasioned by mistaking the Time, convinced me, that it was absolutely necessary *to buy a Clock,* which my Spouse observ'd was *a great*

Ornament to the Room! And lastly, to my Grief, she was frequently troubled with some Ailment or other, and *nothing did her so much Good as Riding; And these Hackney Horses were such wretched ugly Creatures that*—I bought a very fine pacing Mare, which cost £20; and hereabouts Affairs have stood for some Months past.

I could see all along, that this Way of Living was utterly inconsistent with my Circumstances, but had not Resolution enough to help it. Till lately, receiving a very severe Dun, which mention'd the next Court, I began in earnest to project Relief. Last Monday, my Dear went over the River to see a Relation and stay a Fortnight, because she could not bear the Heat of the Town. In the Interim I have taken my Turn to make Alterations; viz, I have turn'd away the Maid, Bag and Baggage, (for what should we do with a Maid, who have except my Boy none but ourselves?) I have sold the fine Pacing Mare, and bought a good Milch Cow with £3 of the Money. I have dispos'd of the Tea Table, and put a Spinning-Wheel in its Place, which methinks looks very pretty: Nine empty Canisters I have stuff'd with Flax, and with some of the Money of the Tea-Furniture I have bought a Set of Knitting-Needles; for to tell you a truth, which I would have go no farther, *I begin to want Stockings.* The stately Clock I have transform'd into an Hour-Glass, by which I have gain'd a good round Sum, and one of the Pieces of the old Looking-Glass, squar'd and fram'd, supplies the Place of the Great One, which I have convey'd into a Closet, where it may possibly remain some Years. In short, the Face of Things is quite changed; and I am mightily pleased when I look at my Hour-Glass. What an Ornament it is to the Room! I have paid my Debts and find Money in my Pocket. I expect my Dame home next Friday, and, as your Paper is taken in at the House where she is, I hope the Reading of this will prepare her Mind for the above surprizing Revolutions. If she can conform to this new Scheme of Living, we shall be the happiest Couple perhaps in the Province, and by the Blessing of God may soon be in thriving

Circumstances. I have reserv'd the great Glass, because I know her Heart is set upon it; I will allow her, when she comes in, to be taken suddenly ill with *the Head-ach, the Stomach-ach, Fainting Fits,* or whatever other Disorder she may think more proper, and she may retire to Bed as soon as she pleases: But, if I do not find her in perfect Health, both of Body and Mind, the next Morning, away goes the aforesaid Great Glass, with several other Trinkets I have no Occasion for, to the Vendue that very Day. Which is the irrevocable Resolution

Of, Sir, Her loving Husband, and

Your very humble Servant,

ANTHONY AFTERWIT.

Postscript. You know we can return to our former Way of Living, when we please, if Dad will be at the Expence of it.

SOME DELICATE BITS OF SCANDAL. *A letter to the editor of the* Pennsylvania Gazette *of 12 September 1732, from a would-be keyhole reporter of the period.*

MR. GAZETTEER, I was highly pleased with your last Week's Paper upon SCANDAL, as the uncommon Doctrine therein preach'd is agreeable both to my Principles and Practice, and as it was published very seasonably to reprove the Impertinence of a Writer in the foregoing Thursday's *Mercury,* who, at the Conclusion of one of his silly Paragraphs, laments forsooth, that the Fair Sex are so peculiarly guilty of this enormous Crime: Every Blockhead, ancient and modern, that could handle a Pen, has, I think, taken upon him to cant in the same senseless Strain. If to *scandalize* be really a Crime, what do these Puppies mean? They describe it, they dress it up in the most odious, frightful, and detestable Colours, they represent it as the worst of Crimes, and then roundly and charitably charge the whole Race of Womankind with it. Are not they then guilty of what they condemn, at the same time that they condemn it? If they accuse us of any other Crime, they must necessarily *scandalize* while they do it; but

to *scandalize* us with being guilty of Scandal, is in itself an egregious Absurdity, and can proceed from nothing but the most consummate Impudence in conjunction with the most profound Stupidity.

This, supposing, as they do, that to scandalize is a Crime; which you have convinc'd all reasonable People is an Opinion absolutely erroneous. Let us leave, then, these Ideot Mock-Moralists, while I entertain you with some Account of my Life and Manners.

I am a young Girl of about thirty-five, and live at present with my Mother. I have no Care upon my Head of getting a Living, and therefore find it my Duty, as well as Inclination, to exercise my Talent at *Censure,* for the Good of my Country-Folks. There was, I am told, a certain generous Emperor, who, if a Day had passed over his Head in which he had conferred no Benefit on any Man, used to say to his Friends, in Latin, *Diem perdidi,* that is, it seems, *I have lost a Day.* I believe I should make use of the same Expression, if it were possible for a Day to pass in which I had not, or miss'd, an Opportunity to scandalize somebody: But, Thanks be praised, no such Misfortune has befel me these dozen Years.

Yet, whatever Good I may do, I cannot pretend that I first entred into the Practice of this Virtue from a Principle of Publick Spirit; for I remember, that, when a Child, I had a violent Inclination to be ever talking in my own Praise; and being continually told that it was ill Manners, and once severely whipt for it, the confin'd Stream form'd itself a new Channel, and I began to speak for the future in the Dispraise of others. This I found more agreeable to Company, and almost as much so to myself: for what great Difference can there be, between putting yourself up, or putting your Neighbour down? *Scandal,* like other Virtues, is in part its own Reward, as it gives us the Satisfaction of making ourselves appear better than others, or others no better than ourselves.

My Mother, good Woman, and I, have heretofore differ'd upon this Account. She argu'd, that Scandal spoilt all good

Conversation; and I insisted, that without it there would be no such Thing. Our Disputes once rose so high, that we parted Tea-Tables, and I concluded to entertain my Acquaintance in the Kitchin. The first Day of this Separation we both drank Tea at the same Time, but she with her Visitors in the Parlor. She would not hear of the least Objection to any one's Character, but began a new sort of Discourse in some such queer philosophical Manner as this; 'I am mightily pleas'd sometimes,' says she, 'when I observe and consider, that the World is not so bad as People out of humour imagine it to be. There is something amiable, some good Quality or other, in every body. If we were only to speak of People that are least respected, there is such a one is very dutiful to her Father, and methinks has a fine Set of Teeth; such a one is very respectful to her Husband; such a one is very kind to her poor Neighbours, and besides has a very handsome Shape; such a one is always ready to serve a Friend, and in my Opinion there is not a Woman in Town that has a more agreeable Air and Gait.' This fine kind of Talk, which lasted near half an Hour, she concluded by saying, 'I do not doubt but every one of you have made the like Observations, and I should be glad to have the Conversation continu'd upon this Subject.' Just at that Juncture I peep'd in at the Door, and never in my Life before saw such a Set of simple vacant Countenances. They looked somehow neither glad, nor sorry, nor angry, nor pleas'd, nor indifferent, nor attentive; but (excuse the Simile) like so many blue wooden images of Rie Doe. I in the Kitchin had already begun a ridiculous Story of Mr. ——'s Intrigue with his Maid, and his Wife's Behaviour upon the Discovery; at some Passages we laugh'd heartily, and one of the gravest of Mama's Company, without making any Answer to her Discourse, got up *to go and see what the Girls were so merry about:* She was follow'd by a Second, and shortly after by a Third, till at last the old Gentlewoman found herself quite alone, and, being convinc'd that her Project was impracticable, came herself and finish'd her Tea with us; ever since

which *Saul also has been among the Prophets,* and our Disputes lie dormant.

By Industry and Application, I have made myself the Centre of all the *Scandal* in the Province, there is little stirring, but I hear of it. I began the World with this Maxim, that no Trade can subsist without Returns; and accordingly, whenever I receiv'd a good Story, I endeavour'd to give two or a better in the Room of it. My Punctuality in this Way of Dealing gave such Encouragement, that it has procur'd me an incredible deal of Business, which without Diligence and good Method it would be impossible for me to go through. For, besides the Stock of Defamation thus naturally flowing in upon me, I practise an Art, by which I can pump Scandal out of People that are the least enclin'd that way. Shall I discover my Secret? Yes; to let it die with me would be inhuman. If I have never heard Ill of some Person, I always impute it to defective Intelligence; *for there are none without their Faults, no, not one.* If she is a Woman, I take the first Opportunity to let all her Acquaintance know I have heard that one of the handsomest or best Men in Town has said something in Praise either of her Beauty, her Wit, her Virtue, or her good Management. If you know any thing of Humane Nature, you perceive that this naturally introduces a Conversation turning upon all her Failings, past, present, and to come. To the same purpose, and with the same Success, I cause every Man of Reputation to be praised before his Competitors in Love, Business, or Esteem, on Account of any particular Qualification. Near the Times of *Election,* if I find it necessary, I commend every Candidate before some of the opposite Party, listening attentively to what is said of him in answer: (But Commendations in this latter Case are not always necessary, and should be used judiciously;) of late Years, I needed only observe what they said of one another freely; and having for the Help of Memory, taken Account of all Informations and Accusations received, whoever peruses my Writings after my Death, may happen to think, that during a certain Term the

People of *Pennsylvania* chose into all their Offices of Honour and Trust, the veriest Knaves, Fools and Rascals in the whole Province. The Time of Election used to be a busy Time with me, but this Year, with Concern I speak it, People are grown so good-natur'd, so intent upon mutual Feasting and friendly Entertainment, that I see no Prospect of much Employment from that Quarter.

I mention'd above, that without good Method I could not go thro' my Business. In my Father's Lifetime I had some Instruction in Accompts, which I now apply with Advantage to my own Affairs. I keep a regular Set of Books, and can tell at an Hour's Warning, how it stands between me and the World. In my *Daybook* I enter every Article of Defamation as it is transacted; for Scandals *receiv'd in* I give Credit, and when I pay them out again I make the Persons to whom they respectively relate *Debtor.* In my *Journal,* I add to each Story, by way of Improvement, such probable Circumstances as I think it will bear; and in my *Ledger* the whole is regularly posted.

I suppose the Reader already condemns me in his Heart for this particular of *adding Circumstances;* but I justify that part of my Practice thus. 'Tis a Principle with me, that none ought to have a greater Share of Reputation, than they really deserve; if they have 'tis an Imposition upon the Publick. I know it is every one's Interest, and therefore believe they endeavour to conceal *all* their Vices and Follies; and I hold that those People are *extraordinary* foolish or careless, who suffer a Fourth of their Failings to come to publick Knowledge. Taking then the common Prudence and Imprudence of Mankind in a Lump, I suppose none suffer above *one Fifth* to be discovered: Therefore, when I hear of any person's Misdoing, I think I keep within Bounds if in relating it I only make it *three times* worse than it is; and I reserve to myself the Privilege of charging them with one Fault in four, which for aught I know, they may be entirely innocent of. You see there are but few so careful of doing Justice as myself. What

Reason then have Mankind to complain of *Scandal?* In a general way the worst that is said of us is only half what *might* be said, if all our Faults were seen.

But, alas! two great Evils have lately befaln me at the same time; an extream Cold, that I can scarce speak, and a most terrible Tooth-ach, that I dare hardly open my Mouth: For some Days past, I have receiv'd ten Stories for one I have paid; and I am not able to ballance my Accounts without your Assistance. I have long thought, that if you would make your Paper a Vehicle of Scandal, you would double the Number of your Subscribers. I send you herewith Account of four Knavish Tricks, two * * *, 5 cu-ld-ms, 3 drub'd Wives, and 4 henpeck'd Husbands, all within this Fortnight; which you may, as Articles of News, deliver to the Publick; and, if my Tooth-ach continues, shall send you more, being in the mean time your constant Reader.

ALICE ADDERTONGUE.

I thank my Correspondent, Mrs. Addertongue, for her Good Will, but desire to be excus'd inserting the Articles of News she has sent me, such Things being in Reality no News at all.

A MODEL LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION. *Dated Paris, 2 April 1777.*

SIR:—The bearer of this, who is going to America, presses me to give him a Letter of Recommendation, tho' I know nothing of him, not even his Name. This may seem extraordinary, but I assure you it is not uncommon here. Sometimes, indeed one unknown Person brings another equally unknown, to recommend him; and sometimes they recommend one another! As to this Gentleman, I must refer you to himself for his Character and Merits, with which he is certainly better acquainted than I can possibly be. I recommend him however to those Civilities, which every Stranger, of whom one knows no Harm, has a Right to; and I request you will do him all the good Offices, and show him all the Favour that, on further Acquaintance, you shall find him to deserve. I have the Honour to be, etc.

POOR RICHARD'S WIFE WRITES A PREFACE. *For the* Almanack *of 1738.*

DEAR READERS, My good Man set out last week for *Potowmack,* to visit an old Stargazer of his Acquaintance, and see about a little Place for us to settle and end our Days on. He left the Copy of his Almanack seal'd up, and bid me send it to the Press. I suspected something, and therefore as soon as he was gone, I open'd it, to see if he had not been flinging some of his old Skitts at me. Just as I thought, so it was. And truly, (for want of somewhat else to say, I suppose) he had put into his Preface, that his Wife *Bridget* . . . was this, and that, and t' other. . . . What a-peasecods! cannot I have a little Fault or two, but all the Country must see it in print! They have already been told, at one time that I am proud, another that I am loud, and that I have got a new Petticoat, and abundance of such kind of stuff; and now, forsooth! all the World must know, that *Poor Dick's* Wife has lately taken a fancy to drink a little Tea now and then. A mighty matter, truly, to make a Song of! 'Tis true; I had a little Tea of a Present from the Printer last Year; and what, must a body throw it away? In short, I thought the Preface was not worth a printing, and so I fairly scratch'd it all out, and I believe you'll like our Almanack never the worse for it.

Upon looking over the Months, I see he has put in abundance of foul Weather this Year; and therefore I have scatter'd here and there, where I could find room, some *fair, pleasant, sunshiny,* &c. for the Good-Women to dry their Clothes in. If it does not come to pass according to my Desire, I have shown my Good-will, however; and I hope they'll take it in good part.

I had a Design to make some other Corrections; and particularly to change some of the Verses that I don't very well like; but I have just now unluckily broke my Spectacles; which obliges me to give it you as it is, and conclude

Your loving Friend, BRIDGET SAUNDERS.

HOW WEATHER IS FORECAST. *Preface to* Poor Richard's Almanack *for 1739.*

KIND READER, Encouraged by thy former Generosity, I once more present thee with an Almanack, which is the 7th of my Publication. While thou art putting Pence in my Pocket, and furnishing my Cottage with necessaries, *Poor Dick* is not unmindful to do something for thy Benefit. The Stars are watch'd as narrowly as old *Bess* watch'd her Daughter, that thou mayst be acquainted with their Motions, and told a Tale of their Influence and Effects, which may do thee more good than a Dream of last Year's Snow.

Ignorant Men wonder how we Astrologers foretell the Weather so exactly, unless we deal with the old black Devil. Alas! 'tis as easy as ***** For Instance; The Stargazer peeps at the Heavens thro' a long Glass: He sees perhaps TAURUS, or the great Bull, in a mighty Chafe, stamping on the Floor of his House, swinging his Tail about, stretching out his Neck, and opening wide his Mouth. 'Tis natural from these Appearances to judge that this furious Bull is puffing, blowing and roaring. Distance being consider'd and Time allow'd for all this to come down, there you have Wind and Thunder. He spies perhaps VIRGO (or the Virgin;) she turns her Head round as it were to see if any body observ'd her; then crouching down gently, with her Hands on her Knees, she looks wistfully for a while right forward. He judges rightly what she's about: And having calculated the Distance and allow'd Time for its Falling, finds that next Spring we shall have a fine *April*

shower. What can be more natural and easy than this? I might instance the like in many other particulars; but this may be sufficient to prevent our being taken for Conjurors. O the wonderful Knowledge to be found in the Stars! Even the smallest Things are written there, if you had but Skill to read. When my Brother J—m—n erected a Scheme to know which was best for his sick Horse, to sup a new-laid Egg, or a little Broth, he found that the Stars plainly gave their Verdict for Broth, and the Horse having sup'd his Broth;—Now, what do you think became of that Horse? You shall know in my next.

Besides the usual Things expected in an Almanack, I hope the profess'd Teachers of Mankind will excuse my scattering here and there some instructive Hints in Matters of Morality and Religion. And be not thou disturbed, O grave and sober Reader, if among the many serious Sentences in my Book, thou findest me trifling now and then, and talking idly. In all the Dishes I have hitherto cook'd for thee, there is solid Meat enough for thy Money. There are Scraps from the Table of Wisdom, that will if well digested, yield strong Nourishment to thy Mind. But squeamish Stomachs cannot eat without Pickles; which, 'tis true are good for nothing else, but they provoke an Appetite. The Vain Youth that reads my Almanack for the sake of an idle Joke, will perhaps meet with a serious Reflection, that he may ever after be the better for.

Some People observing the great Yearly Demand for my Almanack, imagine I must by this Time have become rich, and consequently ought to call myself *Poor Dick* no longer. But, the Case is this,

When I first begun to publish, the Printer made a fair Agreement with me for my Copies, by Virtue of which he runs away with the greatest Part of the Profit.—However, much good may 't do him; I do not grudge it him; he is a Man I have a great Regard for, and I wish his Profit ten times greater than it is. For I am, dear Reader, his, as well as thy

Affectionate Friend

R. SAUNDERS.

A TRUE PROGNOSTICATION FOR 1739. *From the* Almanack *of that year.*

COURTEOUS READERS, Having consider'd the infinite Abuses arising from the false Prognostications published among you, made under the shadow of a Pot of Drink, or so, I have here calculated one of the most sure and unerring that ever was seen in black and white, as hereafter you'll find. For doubtless it is a heinous, foul and crying Sin, to deceive the poor gaping World, greedy of the Knowledge of Futurity, as we Americans all are. Take Notice by the by, that having been at a great deal of pains in the Calculation, if you don't believe every Syllable, Jot and Tittle of it, you do me a great deal of wrong; for which either here or elsewhere, you may chance to be claw'd off with a Vengeance. A good Cowskin, Crabtree or Bull's pizzle may be plentifully bestow'd on your outward Man. You may snuff up your Noses as much as you please, 'tis all one for that.

Well however, come, suite your Noses my little Children; and you old doating Father Grey-Beards, pull out your best Eyes, on wi' your Barnacles, and carefully observe every Scruple of what I'm going to tell you.

OF THE GOLDEN NUMBER

The Golden Number, *non est inventus.* I cannot find it this Year by any Calculation I have made. I must content myself with a Number of Copper. No matter, go on.

Of the ECLIPSES *this Year*

There are so many invisible Eclipses this Year, that I fear, not unjustly, our Pockets will suffer Inanition, be full empty, and our Feeling at a Loss. During the first visible Eclipse

Saturn is retrograde: For which Reason the Crabs will go sidelong, and the Ropemakers backward. The Belly will wag before, and the A— shall sit down first. *Mercury* will have his share in these Affairs, and so confound the Speech of People, that when a *Pensilvanian* would say PANTHER he shall say PAINTER. When a *New Yorker* thinks to say (This) he shall say (Diss) and the people in *New England* and *Cape May* will not be able to say (Cow) for their Lives, but will be forc'd to say (Keow) by a certain involuntary Twist in the Root of their Tongues. No *Connecticut man* nor *Marylander* will be able to open his Mouth this Year but (Sir) shall be the first or last Syllable he pronounces, and sometimes both. Brutes shall speak in many Places, and there will be above seven and twenty irregular Verbs made this Year, if Grammar don't interpose.—Who can help these Misfortunes!

Of the DISEASES *This Year*

This Year the Stone-blind shall see but very little; the Deaf shall hear but poorly; and the Dumb sha'nt speak very plain. And it's much, if my Dame *Bridget* talks at all this Year.

Whole Flocks, Herds, and Droves of Sheep, Swine and Oxen, Cocks and Hens, Ducks and Drakes, Geese and Ganders shall go to Pot; but the Mortality will not be altogether so great among Cats, Dogs, and Horses. As for old Age, 'twill be incurable this Year, because of the Years past. And towards the Fall some People will be seiz'd with an unaccountable Inclination to roast and eat their own Ears: Should this be call'd Madness, Doctor? I think not. But the worst Disease of all will be a certain most horrid, dreadful, malignant, catching, perverse and odious Malady, almost epidemical, insomuch that many shall run mad upon it; I quake for very Fear when I think on't: for I assure you very few will escape this Disease, which is called by the learned Albumazar *Lacko'mony*.

Of the FRUITS *of the* EARTH

I find that this will be a plentiful Year of all manner of good Things, to those who have enough; but the Orange Trees

in *Greenland,* will go near to fare the worse for the Cold. As for Oats, they'll be a great Help to Horses. I dare say there won't be much more Bacon than Swine. *Mercury* somewhat threatens our Parsley-beds, yet Parsly will be to be had for Money. Hemp will grow faster than the Children of this Age, and some will find there's but too much on't. As for Corn, Fruit, Cyder and Turnips, there never was such Plenty as will be now; if poor Folks may have their Wish.

Of the CONDITION *of some* COUNTRIES

I foresee an universal *Droughth* this Year thro' all the Northern Colonies. Hence there will be *dry* Rice in *Carolina, dry* Tobacco in *Virginia* and *Maryland, dry* Bread in *Pennsylvania* and *New York;* and in *New England dry* Fish and *dry* Doctrine. *Dry* Throats there will be everywhere; but then how pleasant it will be to drink cool Cyder! tho' some will tell you nothing is more contrary to Thirst. I believe it; and indeed, *Contraria contrariis curantur.*

R. SAUNDERS.

WEATHER PREDICTIONS FOR BOTH HEMISPHERES. *From the Preface to* Poor Richard Improved *for 1753.*

COURTEOUS READER, This is the twentieth Time of my addressing thee in this Manner, and I have reason to flatter myself my Labours have not been unacceptable to the Publick. I am particularly pleas'd to understand that my *Predictions of the Weather* give such general Satisfaction; and indeed, such Care is taken in the Calculations, on which those Predictions are founded, that I could almost venture to say, there's not a single One of them, promising *Snow, Rain, Hail, Heat, Frost, Fogs, Wind,* or *Thunder,* but what comes to pass *punctually* and *precisely* on the very Day, in some Place or other on this little *diminutive* Globe of ours; (and when you consider the vast Distance of the Stars from whence we take our Aim, you must allow it no small Degree of Exactnesss to hit any Part of it) I say on this Globe; for tho' in other Matters

I confine the Usefulness of my *Ephemeris* to the *Northern Colonies,* yet in that important matter of the Weather, which is of such *general Concern,* I would have it more extensively useful, and therefore take in both Hemispheres, and all Latitudes from *Hudson's Bay* to *Cape Horn.*

WHY THE FIRST ASTROLOGERS WERE HUSBANDMEN. *The Preface to* Poor Richard Improved *for 1754.*

KIND READER, I have now serv'd you three Apprenticeships, yet, old as I am, I have no Inclination to quit your Service, but should be glad to be able to continue in it three times three Apprenticeships longer.

The first *Astrologers* I think, were honest Husbandmen; and so it seems are the last; for my Brethren *Jerman* and *Moore,* and myself, the only remaining Almanack makers of this Country, are all of that Class: Tho' in intermediate Times our Art has been cultivated in great Cities, and even in the Courts of Princes; witness History, from the Days of King Nebuchadnezzar I. of *Babylon,* to those of Queen James I. of *England.* . . . But you will ask, perhaps, how I prove that the first Astrologers were Countrymen? . . . I own this is a Matter beyond the Memory of History, for Astrology was before Letters; but I prove it from the Book of the Heavens, from the Names of the twelve Signs, which were mostly given to remark some Circumstance relative to rural Affairs, in the several successive Months of the Year, and by that Means to supply the Want of Almanacks. . . . Thus, as the Year of the Ancients began most naturally with the Spring, *Aries* and *Taurus,* that is, the Ram and the Bull, represented the successive Addition to their Flocks of Sheep and Kine, by their Produce in that Season, Lambs and Calves. . . . *Gemini* were originally the Kids, but called the Twins, as Goats more commonly bring forth two than one: These follow'd the Calves.

. . . *Cancer,* the Crab, came next, when that Kind of Fish were in Season. . . . Then follow'd *Leo,* the Lion, and *Virgo,* the Wench, to mark the Summer Months, and Dog-days, when those Creatures were most mischievous. In Autumn comes first *Libra* the Ballance, to point out the Time for weighing and selling the Summer's Produce; or rather, a Time of Leisure for holding Courts of Justice in which they might plague themselves and Neighbours; I know some suppose this Sign to signify the equal Poise, at that Time, of Day and Night; but the other Signification is the truer, as plainly appears by the following Sign *Scorpio,* or the Scorpion, with the Sting in his Tail, which certainly denotes the paying of Costs. . . . Then follows *Sagittary,* the Archer, to show the Season of Hunting; for now the Leaves being off the Trees and Bushes, the Game might be more easily seen and struck with their Arrows. . . . The *Goat* accompanies the short Days and long Nights of Winter, to shew the Season of Mirth, Feasting and Jollity; for what can *Capricorn* mean, but Dancing or Cutting of *Capers?* . . . At length comes *Aquarius,* or the Water-bearer, to show the Season of Snows, Rains and Floods; and lastly *Pisces,* or the two Shads, to denote the approaching Return of those Fish up the Rivers: Make your Wears, hawl your Seins; Catch 'em and pickle 'em, my Friends; they are excellent Relishars of old Cyder. . . . But if you can't get Shad, Mackrell may do better.

I know, gentle Readers, that many of you always expect a Preface, and think yourselves slighted if that's omitted. So here you have it, and much good may 't do ye. As little as it is to the Purpose, there are many less so, now-a-days. . . . I have left out, you see, all the usual Stuff about the *Importunity of Friends,* and the like, or I might have made it much bigger. You think, however, that 'tis big enough for any Matter of Good that's in it; . . . I think so too, if it fills the Page, which is the Needful at present.

Your loving Friend to serve,

R. SAUNDERS.